Next Month

and later

WHEN THE ULTIMATE CONSUMER DIES

Bertram B. Fowler

Out in Minnesota, where consumer co-operation has made tremendous strides forward in the last few years, some of the co-operators have a good slogan. They point to their various burial associations and declaim: "Join a co-op and bury yourself for half price!" But that is not merely funny. Let Mr. Fowler give you some facts about the cost of death and about undertaking, which at times has almost graduated from a profession to a racket, and then let him tell you how some very practical people have gone about dying more cheaply.

IS AMERICA DESTINED FOR COMMUNISM?

Everett Dean Martin and Earl Browder

Nobody maintains that the Revolution will strike the United States tomorrow. But some maintain that it will arrive — eventually. Mr. Martin's thesis is that American civilization is of such a nature that communism can never flourish in it. Mr. Browder, head of the Communist Party of America, contradicts him in a lively debate.

YOUR NEW HOUSE: 25 CENTS A POUND

Janet Mabie

How would you like to pick up your telephone and say: "This is Mrs. Whoosis. I want you to deliver your five-room house to my lot at the corner of Vine and Arbor Streets tomorrow. Please be prompt, as I am having guests for dinner in the evening." A startling idea. You may find the story and description of the Dymaxion House even more astounding.

OTHER FEATURES

The first of a new series of articles on current literary topics, in October, by Mary M. Colum; "The New Religion of Leisure," by Marjorie Earstow Greenbie; "Why There Is no Crime in India," by Nilla Cram Cook; "An International Air Police," by Vyvyan Adams; "The Mental Underworld," by Upton Sinclair; stories by Montgomery Hare and Jonas Rosenfield, Jr.

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and Century

HENRY GODDARD LEACH, *Editor*

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BOOKS: A CAUSERIE

BY JONATHAN SCHNELL

JOHN Dos Passos' new novel, THE BIG MONEY (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50), has an extremely interesting form, though for the old-fashioned reader it may prove difficult — in fact it may prove difficult for all readers except those specially interested in the technique of the modern novel. Making a valiant attempt at original form, it sets down in a realistic continuity the lives lived by certain persons whom the author evidently considers as representative of modern American life in cities.

There are, for example, incidents in the life of one Charley Anderson, who was an ace in the World War; there are incidents in the life of Mary French, who turns from the respectable life of a bourgeois young woman to work for the Revolution. Like the other young woman, Helen, who in Aldous Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza* also works for the Revolution, Mary French, as part of her activities in advancing social justice, lives with all the males whose ideas she is interested in at the time. The comrades, however, don't treat Mary as nicely as the "bourjoy" George Barrow, who wants to marry her and buy her a nice little house in Georgetown. She deserts him and passionately devotes herself first to a comrade called Ben Compton and then to another comrade called Don Stevens, whom she feeds and houses. It gave us a surprise to find that Comrade Stevens, when on a month's visit to Russia on a sacred mission for the Revolution, gets hooked into matrimony by a female comrade in the best bourjoy tradition and barely pretends to know Mary when she meets him at the ship on his return.

Margot Dowling, another of the characters, is extraordinarily well done. The daughter of a saleslady at Siegel Cooper's, she becomes practically everything any lady can become, including a showgirl on the Keith circuit, mistress of the aforementioned Charley Anderson, and a celebrated movie actress. She is celebrated, however, only in the silent films, for we gather her *Kultur* was not sufficient to make her a figure in the talkies.

As part of getting down the history of the age, John Dos Passos opens every chapter with reproductions of the news from the papers covering the period from the end of the War and the return of the soldiers until a couple of years after the crash. He evidently thinks that the characteristic personages of that age were Henry Ford, Thorstein Veblen, Samuel Insull, Isadora Duncan, the Wright brothers, Frank Lloyd Wright — the architect, William Randolph Hearst, Edison, and the original efficiency expert — Fred Taylor; and he gives us outlines of their lives and deeds. This book might have been a masterpiece of its kind if the author had managed to show us how the goings on of the characteristic outstanding figures had affected the characteristic little figures of the day. But he shows them as affecting only the minor intelligentsia of the intercity Greenwich Village. The bulk of the inhabitants of the world in our time passes its lives without even meeting on a railway platform any of the types delineated in *The Big Money;* all the people, whether exploited or exploiting, prominent or obscure, are low-grade Main Streeters.

THIS cannot be said about Aldous Huxley's EYELESS IN GAZA (Harper, $2.50), which also tries to represent contemporary history and contemporary civilization and with a technique that has many points of resemblance with John Dos Passos'. We may say right away that we think Dos Passos is a better technician and maybe a better novelist. But Aldous Huxley, as an intellectual type, is higher and is the product of an old civilization. His people are disintegrated just as Dos Passos' are disintegrated, but they are disintegrated as people are who are on the downward incline of civilization. They have lived where there are pictures, music, literature, and most of them understand such things. But their depravity is of a lower order than that of Dos Passos' Main Streeters, because they are depraved from boredom, idleness, skepticism, and general enfeeblement. Helen, like John Dos Passos' Mary French, lives with the "comrades" and with any other gentlemen who are in likely situations, for no reason of passional interest. Dos Passos' women have some reason for their amours, even if it is only a way of getting on in life. At the same time, life is more tolerable for Aldous Huxley's people because it is more civilized or because of something that makes them hold back from committing suicide or murdering each other, as they do in *The Big Money.*

No matter what economic revolution occurs, there are two big revolutions we are certain will happen: one will concern itself with the abolishment of dull, pedestrian people in literature, and the other will concern itself with the obliteration of the promiscuous female or else her interment in the place where she used to be — in a bawdy house or some similar establishment. It is worth pondering, by people interested in presenting the history of the present time, that the bulk of the world can live a whole long life without meeting any of the personages in either of these two advanced books and that even an intellectual can live in many countries and have many contacts without knowing much about them. Who, then, is to relate the history of these times?

We can say about *Eyeless in Gaza* that it is a sort of prophetic book and people will be the better for having read it — this in spite of passages which would have made Mr. Huxley's aunt, the respected Mrs. Humphrey Ward, drop dead:

"Fearless affection restores the lunatic to sanity, transforms the hostile savage into a friend, tames the wild animal. The mental pattern of love can be transferred from one mind to another and still retain its virtue, just as the physical pattern of a hormone can be transferred, with all its effectiveness, from one body to another."

In passages like this the biologist and psychologist, while keeping their professionalism, join with the religious mystics: it is Aldous Huxley's distinction as an intellectual that he is able to bring biologist, psychologist, and mystic together. As a novelist he makes a departure in the method of telling a story — he mixes the chapters, putting 1934 before 1914 and 1918 after 1926. The idea appears to be that, as people haven't any continuous existence as characters and exist only as states of mind, it doesn't matter what year you pick them up in — now or yesterday or the year before last. This is an innovation but, as far as most readers are concerned, it proves to be simply a nuisance.

WE are doubtless in for a flock of books about Spain, just as we had a flock about Ethiopia the season before last. As a revelation of Spanish life, of immemorial Spain as well as Spain torn by civil strife, the novel THE OLIVE FIELD, by Ralph Bates (Dutton, $2.50), will be hard to beat. It is a great advance over his previous *Lean Men*, the scene of which was also in Spain. *The Olive Field* is by a man who has sunk himself in the life of the country, who is able to convey to us the whole of a grave, deep, isolated life of a people which is, perhaps, held to older memories than those shared by other Europeans. Ralph Bates conveys to us the very look of the soil, the earth burnt under the blazing sun, the procession of the seasons — above all, he gives us the life of the olive trees whose growth and fruition mean everything to the community of Los Olivares.

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Books

As well as insurrectionary Spain, with its radicals objecting to the religious dramas, we have the old homogeneous life of Spain, and perhaps no country in Europe is so homogeneous as this land where class and group war is now being waged so ferociously. Priests and anarchists, landlords and peasants, nuns and prostitutes have the same realistic and tragic feeling about their lives. Then we have the men who in every country know, best of all, the land — the shepherds who "know every fountain, every resting-place . . . who know as they pass that here the earth is salt or bitter, or that there a man died." And in contrast to these immemorial figures there is the anarchist who exclaims, "God! I dream sometimes of what the Church might have been if she had been true to Man instead of to God. . . . The only Angelic Doctor who might have saved the Church was born too late. *Ora pro nobis*, San Carlos Marx!"

To understand the changes that are now taking place in the world, it is enlightening to look into the history of other changes that happened in the past. Look, for example, into the change that was brought about in Europe when the medieval world cracked up, when the people lost their common interest through the peasants', nobles', craftsmen's, and city patricians' becoming more and more separated and isolated from each other. It is all a sort of parallel to what is happening to us. But after that ancient change there came a great period, the Renaissance, and the world was flooded with genius — men whose like never appeared before or since — Michelangelo, da Vinci, Shakespeare, Galileo, and many others whose names would fill this page, including Columbus, who discovered this country of ours. It is this period that F. Funk-Brentano puts before us in THE RENAISSANCE (Macmillan, $2.50).

This, maybe, is not the profoundest book on the subject, but it is very entertaining, a skillful and reliable popularization of what the best scholars have dug up about this great period. It gives us the history as it revolved around the great personalities — Copernicus; the great humanist Erasmus; the poet Ronsard; Savonarola, who seems to have been the Father Coughlin of his day. Then we have kings and popes, including Michelangelo's two popes — Alexander and Julius — for whom he performed so many labors, including the Sistine Chapel and the Moses with the horns. The account of the deaths of these two terrifying popes is really hair-raising. There is a lot of interesting information about the finance of the period, and finance seems to have been as fickle and woolly a subject in those times as in ours. The bankers appear to have cut

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the same sort of figure they do now, and Funk-Brentano gives us a lively account of the great bankers of the period, the Fuggers. (How is it bankers always have two-syllabled names?) The writer shows us what a strain was put on the money-making part of Europe at that time by the depreciation of money through the opening of the silver mines of Peru. On the whole, a very suitable book for perusal at the moment.

A FEW years ago it looked as though there were no more heroes left in history — all the famous ones were being debunked by biographers. Now all the famous villains and gangsters are being turned into heroes. A few issues back, we reviewed a book in which the war lord of the Mongols, Genghis Khan, was put forward as a spreader of civilization. In *The Renaissance*, we are given to understand that the terrifying Pope Alexander VI, though a ferocious sensualist, somehow managed to be a God-fearing cleric in addition to a great lover of art. And now we have a book with Herod as hero (HEROD, by Jacob S. Minkin; Macmillan, $2.50).

All most of us know about Herod is the bit of a legend we learned about him in the Bible, and that was about his massacre of the innocents. But now it seems that he never massacred them at all; he couldn't have done it, for according to the author of this biography he died four years before the birth of Christ. But the Bible legend is true in the sense that Herod was the sort who, had he been alive, would have ordered the massacre! This book enlightens us as to who Herod was; he was a desert sheik but a sheik who resisted Cleopatra's blandishments and fought his way up to the throne of Jerusalem and built the great temple of the Jews. He executed his proud and high-born wife, Marianne, whom he seems to have loved passionately, if in a sadistic manner. He was a tragic personage, his reign full of harassing happenings for which his own suspicions and fears seem to have been chiefly responsible.

AFTER reading about this stiff-necked and overbearing ruler it is a relief to turn to Donald Culross Peattie's book, GREEN LAURELS (Simon & Schuster, $3.75), which is about scientists and the most lovable sort of scientists — naturalists. It tells us about another sort of revolution than the social and economic, the one that was begun when the microscope was invented and when the lens was turned upon life, revealing a startling world, an endlessly intricate world which had been there all the time alongside the one we had taken for granted.

Donald Culross Peattie writes with knowledge and enthusiasm about the men

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Books

whose explorations have situated human life in the midst of this intricate and complex world. They are Linnaeus and Lamarck, Audubon, Darwin, Wallace, Fabre, and others less well known. And Donald Culross Peattie makes us realize that these men, who were regarded as mere enthusiasts in their own times, have changed the world more than soldiers and statesmen have done, changed it because they have changed human conceptions about the world. The most impressive of his essays is the one on Lamarck, who, fifty years before Darwin and Wallace handed out the theory of evolution to a startled world, evolved his own evolutionary scheme — to which nobody paid any attention. In writing about this chevalier of science, the author of *Green Laurels* is at his best and most informing.

THEN there is the Secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace, who has written a book (WHOSE CONSTITUTION? Reynal & Hitchcock, $1.75) which ought to be read by everybody, whether he is for or against the New Deal. This book is a plea for an interpretation of the Constitution in terms of contemporary problems and needs. "The Constitution itself was the product of a deep conviction that instruments of government are devised by men for furthering the welfare of men." To embody through the Constitution the spirit of the age we are entering is the task of the American statesmen of today — that is the thesis Mr. Wallace maintains in this challenging book. And what is the spirit of the age? He answers finely that it is co-operation emphasized against individualistic competition, life as emphasized against mechanics. The Secretary of Agriculture has been known to us as one deeply interested in co-operation: in this book he suggests that the Administration should forward co-operation by direct action. Opponents of the New Deal will denounce him as a radical; to us he seems a statesman of a new and better type, a man of brave and humane utterance.

IN his TRAVELS IN TWO DEMOCRACIES (Harcourt, Brace, $2.50), Edmund Wilson is no rigid and stodgy partisan but a thoughtful and sympathetic critic of both America and Russia. The fact that the word *democracy* can now be used to describe both shows that there is an adjustment as between American ideas about Russia and Russian ideas about America.

Travels in Two Democracies is a very individualistic book, for it relates the adventures of a man who is trying to find himself in our changing times and who has a self to find. The bulk of writers on Soviet Russia seems to be engaged in making the people fit into the communist pattern. Wilson does nothing of the kind,

HAVELOCK ELLIS'
PSYCHOLOGY OF
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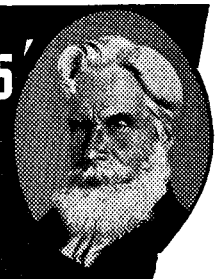

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Books

and the people he shows us are much the same as we used to encounter in Turgenev and Chekhov, rather erratic individuals in spite of five- and seven-year plans. For all its critical appraisal of the Russia of today, the reader is likely to feel himself more sympathetic with the Soviets after reading this book than after perusing the roseate accounts given us by other guests of the U. S. S. R. It is Edmund Wilson's best book.

DELPHIC WOMAN, by Claude Bragdon (Knopf, $2.00), is amongst the books which suggest that the emergence of a new type of human being is the real hope of our world. For the writer, the new type is feminine, one whose psychism is developed and capable of being developed more and more. We belong to a transition age, he says, defining it as the transition from reason to intuition. The book may repel certain tough-minded readers, for there is a good deal in it about Cosmic Love and the Greater and Lesser Mysteries. But there is also a strain of wisdom in it. What Claude Bragdon preaches is a discipline to restore unity of being to people in the modern world who live under disintegrating influences. For a certain type he can do this persuasively.

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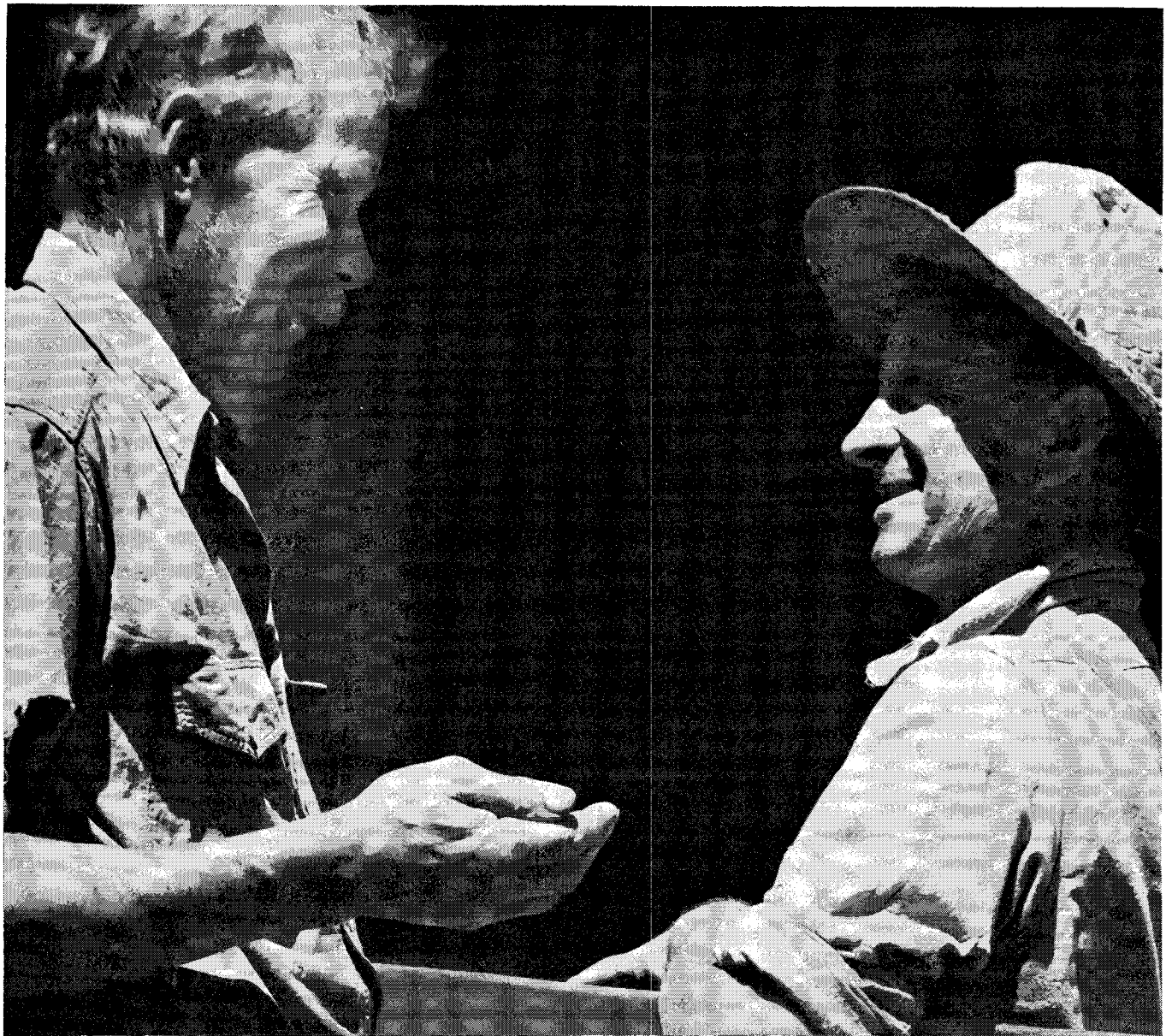

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SEPTEMBER, 1936 VOL. XCVI, NO. 3

Humanizing Machines — II

Kellogg's Six-Hour Day

Editorial Foreword

It is generally conceded that by now we are vigorously on our way out of the depression. Many factories are equaling their 1930 production, and some forecast a return to the peak of 1929. But nearly twelve millions of unhappy unemployed are still left trailing behind in the dust of recovery. Laborsaving devices in office, farm, and factory and in a great variety of pursuits and professions, as well as keener technical skill acquired by those whose jobs survived, have made the services of the willing but less well trained unnecessary.

In this confused situation we have adopted the temporary method of making government — federal, State, or local — clothe and feed the unemployed. Ironically enough, government is enabled to perform this public philanthropy out of taxes levied upon the more lucky or more efficient citizens and heavier assessments imposed upon the increasing profits of industry.

In the midst of our muddled economics it is a pleasure to observe here and there private industries which — instead of complaining about politics — have taken the initiative and adjusted their business to contemporary social conditions. Last month we praised the inventors of the Rust Cotton Picker, who refuse to put their invention on the market so quickly that it will dislocate employment in the cotton belt. This month we call attention to the success during five years of depression of a factory which spread employment and enriched its community by installing a six-hour day and a 36-hour week.

2,000,000 Packages

The production of the Kellogg Company is done in one plant in Battle Creek, Michigan. Its products are distributed and consumed in every corner of the nation. There is probably no home so humble that it does not know the uses of Kellogg's corn flakes, Kellogg's Rice Crispies, or some other alluring breakfast dish or Kellogg's Kaffee Hag. Nearly two million of these Kellogg packages are packed every 24 hours.

The president of this industry, Mr. W. K. Kellogg, is not a social philosopher. He is a very hard-headed businessman. That he has generous social wisdom is obvious to anyone visiting Battle Creek. Schools, libraries, hospitals bear very visible testimony to his quiet and unadvertised philanthropy. The cheerfulness of his employees reflects his spirit of fair play. But he is not a sentimentalist. He insists that liberal management shall be profitable for the employer as well as the employee.

The six-hour day was adopted by the Kel-

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logg plant after one year of the depression, on December 1, 1930. The primary purpose of this program was to lighten the increasing burden of unemployment in the Battle Creek community. Processing in this plant requires continuous operation day and night and Sunday. Kellogg employees had never been subjected to the ancient twelve-hour day or been reduced to ten hours. They had three shifts of eight hours. The management figured that by changing to four shifts of six hours each the number of new jobs would be increased by one fifth.

How to shorten the hours and spread the jobs without reducing the earning power of each worker already employed presented a difficult problem. In looking about for precedents the company found none; it was a pioneer and experimenter. After a great deal of study it decided to begin by splitting the difference with the employees. While hours were reduced 25 per cent, wage rates per hour were increased 12½ per cent, which, it was calculated, with the recent decreasing cost of living, would give the worker the purchasing power he enjoyed back in 1928. There was an exception to this plan in favor of male workers receiving the minimum wage of $4 a day. A social survey showed that $4 was none too much for decent living in Battle Creek; so the old minimum was retained with the new hours — an increase incidentally, of 34 per cent in the rate per hour.

The plan worked. Efficiency increased, production accelerated, accidents and illness decreased, and the community grew in cheerfulness. It must be remembered that all this happened not on a rising tide of prosperity, when new experiments are relatively easy, but in a race with the swift, receding tide of the depression. It must further be remembered that the Kellogg Company enjoyed no advantage of monopoly in its field but had to experiment socially in the midst of active business competition. For example, another great cereal competitor in its own town did not put through a six-hour day. We say this to anticipate the argument so often brought forward by manufacturers who say that a desirable reform is impossible unless there is general agreement among all manufacturers of similar products.

After five years the Kellogg six-hour day had proved itself so surely that another big step was taken. In November, 1935, the wages of men employees for the short day were advanced to what they had received in 1930 for the long day. The higher wages were increased 12½ per cent, and in addition the minimum wage was raised from $4 to $4.50 a day. Many employees also receive a bonus. Meanwhile, proportionate adjustments had been made in the wages of women.

Many factors of saving have combined to make the increased wage possible. The worker does not, under the six hours of continuous labor, need to relax for a time before his lunch hour or to take it easy for a while after lunch until he gets into the rhythm again. One can reckon also on the snap and punch and drive of the worker who comes in after eighteen long hours of freedom enjoyed in sleep and self-improvement. The machines are simply kept humming night and day, as nearly 100 per cent of the time as human alertness can tend them.

18 Free Hours

What do the employees do with their eighteen free hours every day and their one full holiday a week? At least six of these leisure hours are daylight. The visitor sees a lot of gardening going on about Battle Creek. Thus many employees obviously are still further reducing the net cost of living by supplying their own kitchens. Athletics and hobbies are also in evidence, and the libraries well patronized. It is to be hoped that the mental background of these fortunate workers is becoming richer. Their health record, at any rate, has been on the up-and-up, and they have become so alert in avoiding accidents that time off for mishaps has decreased 39 per cent since the eight-hour gave way to the six-hour day.

Mr. Kellogg believes that shorter hours plus higher wages is the answer to the economic riddle of a country in which production, between 1900 and 1930, increased six times as fast as population. "Wages will have to be *increased to compensate for the shorter working hours* if purchasing power is to be maintained." This will seem paradoxical to many. Call it "revolutionary" if you want to blast a sensible idea by a sensational word. But Kellogg's have made what appears to some manufacturers a Utopian fallacy profitable alike for workers and owners and a boon to the community.

Henry Goddard Leach

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God Becomes a Convenience

A Warning that the Church's Tyranny Can Be Dangerous

by **PEARL S. BUCK**

One of the diversions of living in the United States is watching the wax and wane of vogues among the people. As a diversion this cannot be fully appreciated unless there have been previous long years of living elsewhere, among people whose mental and emotional stability is established and where, barring flood or famine, one knows one's neighbors will believe and behave in approximately the same manner next year or ten or twenty years hence as they do today. And even flood and famine may not there fundamentally disturb the spirit. Depression, for instance, does not send the Chinese into panic; it does not flood their temples with penitents or their newspapers with stories of suicides. Everybody merely eats less or next to nothing and waits. Nor does prosperity change men more. Riches do not turn men away from their gods, if they have them in poverty, and people seem neither better nor worse for plenty. They remain very much their usual selves.

But, thanks to our careering climate or to the volatility of our mixed bloodstream, thanks to whatever it is that causes permanently adolescent spirits, to live in America is to escape such sameness. The violence of our national loves and hates, the certainty that the figure adored today will be hated tomorrow are facts so obvious that they are apparent to the most superficial observer, and expected by any person with the temerity to undertake any sort of life which exposes him to our savage and unreasoning public prejudices. But more interesting and less obvious is the deep willfulness of our souls, which does not concern itself with men alone. We put away, as easily as we do all else, ideas and conclusions, ideals and standards and take them up again with all the excitement of novelty, when change is wanted. There is nothing fixed, not only in our external social life but in our own natures. We have no body of basic beliefs, no feelings or faiths which are unalterable—such, for instance, as the family tradition in China or France, the feeling of the English for England and the King, the reverence for imperialism in Japan, the feeling for God and the spirit in India. These faiths and feelings run so deep through generations and centuries that time and the new cannot shake them, however assailed; for they have passed out of the realm of the mind and reason into the blood and bone, into the being of the people. They have become integral in the race.

We in the United States have no such integral faiths. The only sure law of our being is that we have no law, and everything is subject to fashion and fad. This is of course explained partly at least by the fact that we come from many faiths, and where there are many there cannot be one. Our uncertainties come partly from the fact that, whatever group one is born into, it is only a small group and we see, very near, entirely different groups with other ideas and patterns. I have often heard it deplored that the people of the United States are so

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standardized. The forms of public education are blamed for it, the forms of religion, the forms of social pressure; and it is true that, lacking deeper surety, these forms do exercise great power. Nevertheless it seems truer that we are not standardized enough. We are unsure because we have no long group experience grown into belief. We are subject to no deep, compelling, unified racial pressure. In short, we are at the complete mercy of the latest things in clothes, food, behavior, belief.

Straws in the Wind

It is difficult to imagine, without actually seeing it is so, that this list would also include religion, for religion in the life of peoples has been an expression of their deep and fundamental quality. Religion in India, China, and Japan, for instance, is completely different in each country because it is expressed by completely different types of peoples. The profoundly mystical Hindu, whose life remains essentially apart from this world; the practical Chinese priest, who enjoys his life and shows it in his merry eye and fat jowl; the devoted Japanese, who makes the shrine a part of his daily life as soldier, merchant, or whatever he may be — to all of these religion is an expression each of himself and of the way he lives, nor does he for a moment believe that what it is necessary for him to express can be expressed in exactly the same form by another man, even of his own race. It would be impossible to think of such rooted religion, therefore, as a vogue to be ignored or taken up as the mood of the age may prompt.

But religion in my own country, I discover, is not the expression of any deep racial or national or individual nature. It is almost quite external, a body of statements written into catechisms and constitutions but not practiced or believed deeply. It is, therefore, subject to the same forces as are all other parts of our national life, from our hats to our heroes. This morning's paper, for instance, gives considerable space to what is nothing more nor less than a religious civil war. Two groups of a certain denomination, each declaring the other is not standing by the body of material called the church constitution, mutually excommunicate each other. It makes exciting reading. Without cursing and swearing, the effect of the language used on both sides is extremely stimulating. It is better than a prize fight, because it is real fighting between people who hate each other — it's a cat-and-dog fight, in other words. Yet why is it of importance, of such importance that the *New York Times* gives it a full column? Is it because it is a fight or because religion is coming into vogue again?

But a certain popular monthly, which is of importance here because it follows so closely the popular mind and its clamorings, also has a good deal to say about religion these days. The last number has pages of material, digested into that deadly literalness which is so severe a test of the meat of an article, from a recent book on religion, written by a psychoanalyst who thinks religion is a good thing for the average man and who, with a materialism which is appalling to the truly religious mind, goes on to show why it pays to be religious. It appears that psychoanalysts are recommending religion these days to their patients, as something to take their minds off themselves and give them social activities. This is a little different from the older brand of religion, which urged a soul to examine its own self and repent of its sins. But we did not know then that Jesus was a psychoanalyst himself, who taught people how to be extrovert instead of introvert, how to forget sins in good works.

In yet another magazine, a more than popular, a necessary weekly, there appeared recently a little poem, very smart, maintaining the poet's right to be good if he wished, instead of aping the tiresome old-fashioned wickedness of his fellows; to believe religion; to behave in the new-old moral ways; declaring at last that there were as many good people in the Church as out of it. In short, it seems the latest independence in poets and others is to try God for a change.

The very scientists, who used in the old days to maintain a waggish attitude toward miracles, have gone over to the latest thing. The limitations of science, which they freely express with new humility, are another source of reinforcement for religion. The time is past, apparently, if we are to believe the scientists, for confidence in science. Manufacturers want these days to limit science for commercial reasons, but scientists limit themselves. There are things, they tell us, beyond the power of science to know, ultimates which science will never reach because the human mind is an in-

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strument not fine enough to perceive them. Curiously enough, the vogue for religion is such that now, unable to face the probable truth, the human mind leaps at once to belief in what it cannot know. Science is not vast enough to show us God; the human brain not strong enough to prove him; therefore we will to believe anyhow — so argues the impatient human soul and swallows miracles at a gulp.

These are all straws blowing together in the same wind, and if they are not enough to show which way the wind is blowing there is yet another, and this is the space that is given in daily newspapers to the so-called Oxford Movement or Buchmanism. It is true that these reports carry with them an interest for the ordinary reader that is something more than purely religious. There is the excitement of the names of possibly important persons confessing to sins which may be scandalous. Yesterday a pretty young woman perusing the column looked up with a flush of triumph. "There!" she cried, "I always thought that old man was nasty!"

Doubtless if these reports were strictly religious, without either names or sins, they would be considerably shorter and less carefully followed. For intrinsically there is nothing new in the principle of God guidance which Buchmanism so strongly advocates — it is also the principle on which Hinduism, one of the most ancient of religions, is founded, and devout Hindus have practiced it for centuries. It results in its extreme form in the completely possessed creatures one sees wandering about the Indian streets and countryside, naked, with matted hair, with eyes that see nothing any more on earth. For even God may become a mania or, as Buchmanism puts it, a passion. There are minds that long for this possession, this mania, because then all else is gone — all thought, all reason, all judgment — and there is left the escape from the problems of life which only the insane may enjoy.

So publishers are finding it profitable to publish books about religion, novels about religions, and editors are eager for articles about religion; for people want to read them again. They are beginning to wonder if after all there may not be something to it. The latest column on Buchmanism this morning reports that millions of dollars were saved in Canadian fishing industries and a hotel was saved from bankruptcy through the use of Buchmanism. This looks like something, at least.

What's a Church For?

Religion, in short, is in again. The churches are filling once more, and the pews are no longer sparsely scattered with white heads, while the young make merry in other places. The young no longer make merry, for they are not merry, and so they are going to church instead. At least we are to believe this if the figures are true. And one is inclined to believe if one lives in a village and sees the solemn files along the sidewalks on a Sunday morning or if one watches at any noontime the people climbing into the shadows of a city cathedral.

There is, of course, nothing surprising to the observer of human beings in this returning vogue for religion. The Israelites had it in ancient times, after every debauch, after every combat with their enemies in which they failed to be victorious. They rushed back to God, penitent, imploring, and when they felt themselves reinstated in divine favor they sallied forth to sin and war again. The pendulum beat of man's impulse toward personal freedom and his fears when his freedom threatened him with chaos is a story as old as man's life. Whatever we brought with us from our ancient animal ancestry, it was not the philosophy which makes animals fight fate and accept death as they must. We do not even approximate such deep philosophy until we become old as the oldest races are old and once more simple as the beasts are. When our own acts mount about us into results beyond our control, we run to the security of religion as destructive children who have pulled their own house about their ears run to their parents, to cry for protection and deliverance from what they themselves have done, longing even for punishment, if things may only be again as they were.

There is in this returning vogue for religion such childishness, such need for some sort of security, preferably of the body in this world but, if not here in governments, in friends, in family, then in the Church and a hope for heaven and immortality. This is the strongest

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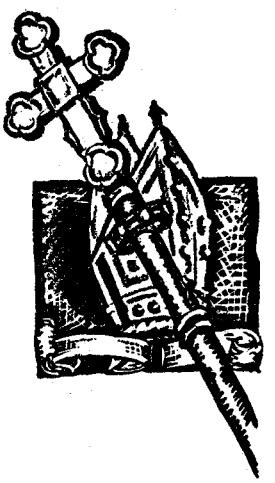
hold which the Church has over the people — she offers almost the sole stability in the nation. Everything fluctuates with terrifying rapidity; presidents dash in and out of power; politics rules the governing figures of the day, and the people's whim all others; families change; and the rented roof or apartment no longer shelters with any certainty. There is nothing for most people to go back to any more, except the Church. The Church alone stands, huge, unchanged, familiar. It is something to have four stable walls about one, even for only an hour a week; something to feel gathered with people who, if they are not friends, are at least not enemies.



I, who have grown up in a country where there are not these huge structures of brick and stone, these flocking souls, have been skeptical now when Christians come to my door begging. I have asked to be convinced that I should give to this structure to which I am not accustomed and which is of no use to me personally. These are the arguments given to convert me.

"We provide a place in the community where young men and women can meet under good auspices to dance and have games."

"That is well, but what has this to do with religion?" I inquire. My friend who owns a printing plant does the same thing, but he does not ask me for money. Moreover, to my notion, a community is shirking its job if it relegates to any organization or individual alone this activity. I had rather give my money to trying to make all the dance halls in our town fit places for the young to meet. Or I had rather give to a church which considers this its task rather than the maintenance of a private hall for its members or hoped-for members.

"Well," says Mr. B., whom I really like and respect very much, "you wouldn't want to bring up your children in a community where there is no church, would you?"

I intimate, somewhat timidly, for I find my countrymen very sensitive on religious subjects, that I wouldn't mind, having grown up myself very comfortably in such a community.

"Oh no," says Mr. B., very decidedly, "it wouldn't do at all — not in America. Why, the bad people would soon run things, and there wouldn't be anybody to fight the evils in the town. Children would go to the dogs."

Listening to Mr. B., I hear that the Church is the sole restraining and uplifting force in American life. A community without a church would be unthinkable. I remember the decent, law-abiding, kindly faces of my childhood neighbors in a Chinese countryside and wonder what it was that made them good. They were not religious, beyond a candle or two at New Year's; they did not sing hymns or pray or talk about God. Neither had they any real government, except what they decided among themselves, and they had no police. If a man killed another, they met and heard why he did and decided whether he should die. If a son were cruel to a parent, if a man and woman loved each other who were not free to do so, if a child were sinned against or a fowl or a garment stolen, they decided together what justice was in each case. If some families were hungry and others had plenty, the community provided means of relief, and if all were hungry in times of great famine they suffered and died together, uncomplaining, unafraid. There was no fear of life, no crying to God, no terror of what was beyond.

But Mr. B. will not understand these things. Whatever I say, he persists in thinking of those people as heathen and he is one of the foremost each year in making up the missionary pot. Nevertheless, because I like Mr. B.'s ruddy face and his honest eyes, in spite of the limitations of the mind behind them, I give him what he wants, with the sole stipulation that none of it is to be used for the missionary pot. This always sends him away astonished and a little doubtful of the gift, which nevertheless he always takes.

The Power to Order Life

The Church, then, stands for moral security in an insecure society, now as in the Dark Ages. She stands, too, for that subtler security, dictatorship. For the greatest insecurity in our country today is not social — it is spiritual. That is the only real insecurity, anyway. People can live in any sort of flux if they are inwardly stable. And less than a hun-

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dred years ago spiritual security was taken for granted among us. There never was a group more self-assured, more certain of its souls and the souls' destination than the Pilgrims and the Puritans. In that certainty the churches were founded, and the preachers of that gospel were powerful as no one is powerful now except Hitler and Mussolini. No one could have fun at the expense of a preacher or even venture a criticism of a sermon without being fined for it. Preachers were divine representatives, and men who enjoyed power became preachers and priests and exercised their power. And it was and is a power — for the Catholic priest has been able to hold it — of the subtlest sort: power over the souls of others. Communism knows that power, and fascism also. Hold a man by his soul and you have him. The Church early discovered this truth and fought for the prerogative most bitterly.

And most people like it and subject themselves to it. It is a common saying that women like to be mastered, but the truth is that nearly all people like to be mastered — that is, the average human brain is so intrinsically lazy that it is grateful to be relieved of thought and decision and gladly takes refuge in the drowsy docility of accepting what it is told to believe. It is infinitely easier to follow directions, body and soul, than it is not to do so. So the people flock into the churches and lift their faces to hear a man tell them, as Hitler tells his people, as Mussolini tells his, what they are to believe and to do; and this becomes the will of God. It is spiritual security for those who are mentally unfit to cope with life as it is; and, the more chaotic the times, the more people flock to those who will tell them what to do. When other leaders fail, they flock to those who tell them what God wants them to do. After all, God —

Religion and the Individual

Recognizing, therefore, that we have religion with us again, it is interesting to ponder a while on what it will mean, good or bad, to the individual, the people, and the world we live in, remembering history and the return of religion in times past.

Obviously it will mean now, as it always has, some good and some evil. It is not useful to argue here what may or may not be divine about religion, for the fact remains that, however the source may be divine, whatever emanates from that source is through human beings, and so is tinged more or less with human quality. Nothing in religion can be wholly divine, even granting divinity, for men apply religion in human ways, according to their human conceptions. There is no such thing possible, for instance, as real God guidance, because the human being inevitably interprets whatever that may be through his own peculiar mind. Men have killed each other guided, they thought, by God; witches have been burned, and whole populations massacred by God-guided individuals. Misery immeasurable has been heaped upon friends, neighbors, loved ones by men and women who honestly and truly believed themselves God-guided. I shall not forget as long as I live the look of anguish in the eyes of a pagan woman who was told her husband burned in hell — and she destined for heaven! Yet when I turned in protest to the priest who told her this, my anger fell into pity, for his eyes were anguished, too. He felt himself compelled by God to speak what he thought was true. So there remained only the simple question to put to the woman: "How can you feel yourself saved if you must spend your eternity alone without him you love?" She slipped out of the Church that day, never to return. There may be some happiness in hell.

No, God guidance is not to be trusted, not when God's voice comes through human mouths, informed by subconscious human wills. And the mildest, gentlest creature, if he feels himself the instrument of a power beyond himself, may become strong to compel and cruel to judge. Indeed, the effect of religion upon the individual is too often a thing for society to fear. He becomes confident of his own ability to decide what is right and wrong, not only for himself, which would be well enough, but for others. For it seems humanly impossible to be humble and professionally religious at the same time. The priest's face may be meek, his eyes downcast, his robes of sackcloth, his hands folded about a Bible or a beggar's bowl, but his heart is filled with a pride of which he is often unaware, which is more dangerous than any other pride because it is spiritual. He knows he is right and, though he may wish not to judge others, the more sure he is of his own rightness and his own security

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with God, the more he does judge others, the more he tries to compel them to his own ways of thought and belief. There may be humble Christians, but there never were humble missionaries or priests. It is a contradiction in terms.

But there can be no doubt that for the individual concerned, selfishly speaking, religion may be a good thing. For the one unable to face the inexplicable quality of life, the atomic, lonely human soul, the somber, endless universe, religion is good. It prolongs the security of childhood until death. Christ knew the average human heart when he taught men to say *Our Father*. . . . But the moment when he really transcended humanity was when he said, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" and, accepting that final loneliness, descended into death. There are a few who follow Christ only because of that cry.

Practically speaking, therefore, religion is an excellent thing for the individual in our disorganized society. The simplicity of the commandments affords a yardstick which the most childish mind can follow and obey, if the will is thereto directed. To obey our parents; not to lie, steal, kill, commit adultery; not to want what does not belong to one — these are valuable basic rules for people living together. The further commandment, to treat other people as we should like to be treated, is, however, too complex, and is not taken seriously or put among the real rules of the Church.

Religion and Society

Granted these advantages, we must expect with the reviving interest in religion a return of dogmatism, not only in creed but in moral standards. For religion is a form of imperialism beginning in the realm of the spirit, but in its ramifications it will reach into other forms of imperialism. The Church has always been imperialistic. Her missionaries have not unjustly been accused of being forerunners of imperialism, to be followed or accompanied by traders and treaties. They are by their very nature imperialists. This fresh religious imperialism in our own country will undoubtedly show itself in a new wave of missionary zeal, and the missionaries who go forth again will naturally be not the more liberal among the religious but the most intolerant, the narrowest, the most spiritually domineering. Indeed, this is already true, as anyone knows who is familiar with the prevailing type of missionary of the last five years. And this rise in missionary zeal will bring fresh energy into the Church; it will bring new intolerance, a rising conviction of superiority and self-satisfaction which, spreading among the people, will do nothing for mutual good will among nations.

Nor will we at home who take no part in it be spared its effects. Our personal lives will be judged not by the truth of how we have suffered and how endured, not by what we achieve or what we are. We shall be judged solely by whether our outward actions conform wholly to a certain narrow, inexorable line of behavior and whether our minds conform to a certain narrow creed of belief.

For the human generosity of Christ is not in organized religion now any more than it ever has been. He did not conform to his day nor would he to ours, so strangely the same. Men have made an image of him instead, which serves them better than he could if he were alive. Yes, time and again I have seen that the cruelest judgment upon fellow creatures is made by Christians; the most heartless contempt is poured by Christians upon those whose sufferings they do not even take the trouble to know; the blindest condemnation is made by those who shout aloud in their churches, "Blessed are the merciful —." But one finds true mercy only among people who have themselves suffered and been broken or who have hearts quick and sensitive to share pain. If these are also Christians it is an accident.

I am constrained to believe that there is some curious intensifying power in religion. It is a magnifying glass, burning upon the soul, deepening its individual qualities. Saint Paul persecuted before he became converted, and, turning right about, he continued his persecutions, bitter to the end. The reason why converted persons are happy and liberated is simply that they feel more free to be themselves.

For I do not share the belief that religious people are hypocrites. Most religious people are desperately sincere, and that is why they are dangerous and terrifying. Hypocrites there are, and the vogue for religion will make more, for in any insecure society people are afraid of each other. If it is the thing to go to church,

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many will go who secretly wish they need not. When professed belief in a creed is made the criterion of character or professional recommendation, there will be hypocritical profession. An increase in hypocrisy is therefore inevitable with the return of religion.

The Rising Dictatorship of the Church

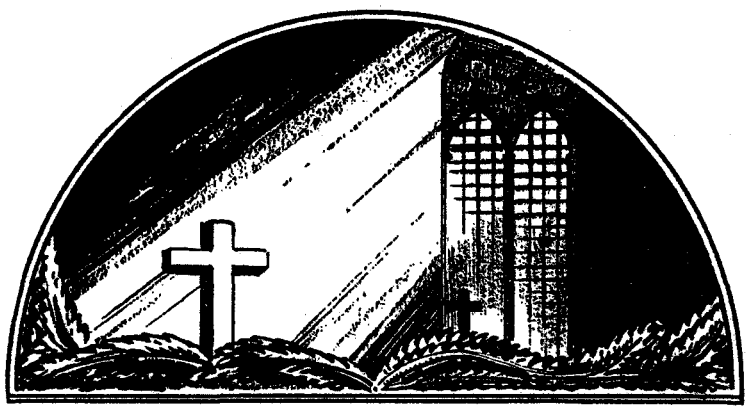
There is much said these days about fascism, much fear of fascism in government. Yet few seem to perceive a real fascist danger. It is not in politics or in labor or in any political party. It is the spiritual fascism of the Church which we need to fear. For fascism anywhere is an essentially religious movement. Hitler and Mussolini have their people by the souls, and they use religion to aid them. We have no Hitler or Mussolini but we have a proved, organized religion, a religion with a long history of spiritual pride and dictatorship; and its power is waxing again.

Increased censorship of the screen, the stage, magazines, stories, the press; increased and open denial of the rights of the individual in such matters as marriage and divorce and birth control — these and a generally reactionary stand on all moral and social matters point to the rise of spiritual fascism. Priests and preachers will rise again in power, and it may once again be a crime to see their follies or discern them as a little lower than the angels or question what they choose to say. Again they will be divine spokesmen. Their sermons are even now receiving the renewed and solemn notice of that press which is simply a reflection of the popular vogue. For why otherwise is it of importance on Monday morning to read that on Sunday Dr. A. said Prohibition was the hope of the nation or that Dr. B. said the Church is the foundation of the state or that Dr. C. said anything at all? There are those who may be heard not for what they say but for what they are. Let them be heard quietly in their places but not as dictators to the people.

In the rise of religion, therefore, I see the most probable force for fascism in our life. I see this subtle religious fascism extending again into all our life; shaping our young through schools, both State and Church; determining our art and literature through the simple commercial need of artist, writer, publisher, salesman, and all those who must live by public whim; tampering with the private lives of individuals by judging without knowledge; forcing laws to be made not for human need and human help but for the glory of a creed.

Spiritual imperialism abroad, spiritual fascism at home — against these the small benefit of the individual security of a person in a church group, docile to a creed, seems less than nothing.

Is there, then, to be no haven for the soul? There is a haven, but it is not in the dangers of organized religion. Indeed, for the soul large enough for freedom there can be no haven so confined. Religion in its true and mystic meaning is the individual soul's relationship with the universe. In the universe is the soul's home; in the full stretch of realization of life and death, in the full acceptance of pain and loneliness and fate is the soul's safety. The lesser soul may need a smaller haven, a haven made with human hands, directed by human wills. Let it be so. But, for the sake of humanity, that smaller haven must not be called the home of God, nor must men be compelled to live there. For God dwells in no house made with hands. All time is his space, all space his home. In such vastness we need not push and shove and set up our little barriers of creed and judgment. Within those illimitable limits there is room for us all.



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Are We Going Broke?

A Debate on National Finances

I—Up to Our Neck in Debt

***by* H. PARKER WILLIS**

THE OPENING of a new fiscal year on July 1, with a public debt which had reached an all-time peak with an aggregate near $34,000,000,000, has naturally attracted the attention of the public to the question of Treasury conditions. Secretary Morgenthau, in his annual statement, is inclined to treat the great growth in debt rather lightly, pointing out that a very substantial percentage of the increase in new debt since the opening of the present administration has been the result of loans for which the various governmental agencies have claims upon those who have borrowed the funds, the result being a corresponding lessening of the true total of obligations.

Indeed, in Secretary Morgenthau's annual statement, while he places the aggregate debt at $33,750,000,000, an increase of about $18,000,000,000 since President Roosevelt took office, he is disposed to claim an offset of about $8,750,000,000, composed of $2,750,000,000 balance in the Treasury fund, the stabilization fund amounting to $2,000,000,000, and at least $4,000,000,000 loans which it is assumed will eventually be collected. There is another side to this offset question, due to the fact that the government itself has guaranteed outstanding bonds which are reported in the Federal Reserve Bulletin each month and now aggregate a total upwards of $5,000,000,000, which, of course, must be added to the total for which the government is eventually liable.

Its actual debt, then, would seem to be in the neighborhood of $34,000,000,000, with a contingent liability of $5,000,000,000 additional, making nearly $39,000,000,000; while the government has on hand in the "general fund" $2,700,000,000 plus the stabilization fund of $2,000,000,000. Making these deductions of $4,700,000,000, we should have left an outstanding debt of about $34,300,000,000. The miscellaneous assets which are counted by Mr. Morgenthau as possible or probable reductions in liability, resulting from collections, will eventually produce something. Judging from the experience thus far had with the government's claims against borrowers in the way of necessary renewals, it would seem that the actual collections eventually realized would be a comparatively small percentage of the total. However this may be, it is admitted by all that most of whatever is collected will come in only after a great while; the same considerations which led to the lending of it in the first place proving influential in bringing about renewals or extensions. On the other hand, the meeting of the principal and interest upon guaranteed obligations, when these fall due and are not otherwise met, is unavoidable, as a matter of the sustaining of public credit. The obligations which have thus been incurred on a contingent basis present a kind of liability which is constantly developing into some draft upon the ability of the government to pay; while the stabilization fund and the general fund of the Treasury are, of course, unproductive and merely represent working funds that are theoretically available. From all practical standpoints, therefore, the actual burden of the existing debt at the present time must be regarded as equivalent to an amount substantially more than the $33,750,000,000 definitely recognized. If we say that at the present moment the government is actually carrying a load of about $35,000,000,000 of indebtedness, we shall be putting the matter conservatively.

II

AS WE HAVE just seen, Mr. Morgenthau's annual statement places the increase of public debt during the Roosevelt Administration at about $13,000,000,000, minus, according to

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him, the offset of some $8,750,000,000 more or less representing cash in hand and recoverable assets: an indicated increase of debt then of about $13,000,000,000 and, according to Mr. Morgenthau's estimate, a real increase of only about $4,250,000,000. The Secretary of the Treasury, moreover, points out that, owing to constant reductions in the rate of interest, which he estimates at about one quarter of the original amount, the annual cost of carrying the debt has been reduced by $260,000,000 and is not much more than it was at the opening of the new administration.

After making all allowances and offsets and after allowing for the reduction in the rate of interest which has taken place and above all after assuming that the present reduction in the rate of interest will continue indefinitely, we still have an outstanding and undisputed debt which is very much higher than it has ever been before and which today is far above the total that had been expected or estimated in advance by our Treasury authorities. The situation naturally raises in a good many minds two questions: (1) How far will this increase in debt be likely to continue, and (2) how far is the nation likely to be able to continue to carry further increments of debt? These two questions are of very vital significance, particularly in view of the fact that our present system of taxation by no means provides the income necessary to cover present expenses, so that the country, as things stand, must expect to face a continuing indebtedness as time goes on.

It needs no argument to show that this is a situation that is necessarily temporary, but the questions remain: What is its degree of permanence, and what factors are likely to bring it to a close? There has been a great deal of discussion within the past two or three years about the amount of debt that the nation "can" carry. Some persons high in the national service have gone so far as to estimate the amount that can be borne by the federal government as, perhaps, double its present amount — say, $65,000,000,000 or $70,000,000,000; and the vague statement has been made that such estimates have been sanctioned by well-informed bankers. To such assertions is added the further estimate that our present indebtedness, if computed either as a fraction of total national wealth or as a per-capita burden resting upon the population, is very low as compared with the debt burdens of inhabitants of other countries and may be considerably increased.

Comparisons between the United States and other countries are usually made without taking into account all of the facts in the case. For instance, our States and municipalities have in nearly all cases large debts outstanding. In some States the actual burden of this debt is more severe than the proportionate share of the federal debt for which property owners are liable. Exact comparisons, therefore, between the amount of outstanding debt which must be borne by citizens of various countries are usually not reasonable, and are made without recognition of the fact that the whole question of the ability of the country to carry indebtedness depends upon the character of her taxation, quite as truly as upon the amount of wealth that she owns. A traveler hastening to a train may find himself very much embarrassed by a great number of packages or boxes of varying sizes but, if able to arrange what he has to carry in a single large traveling bag, may have comparatively little difficulty carrying his luggage. So with a citizen in a country where numerous ill-assorted and oppressive forms of taxation are in vogue. He might easily enough pay the total amount that is asked of him if the load were to be differently distributed and were to be put in a form more convenient to bear.

III

This is the situation of the United States at the present time. The question of how heavy a burden of taxation and of indebtedness can be endured by the community is not susceptible of any absolute answer, nor is a conclusion with regard to it facilitated by ill-advised comparisons with conditions in other countries which are not on the same footing. Unquestionably, a very much larger burden of debt than is now resting on the United States could be endured — but only in the event of an entire readjustment of our tax system. In order to rival other countries, we should have to readjust our income-tax system in such a way as to have it reach the lower strata of incomes.

In the last analysis, of course, the capacity of the country to obtain wealth by taxation or by borrowing is dependent upon the amount which the community has and the proportion of its

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total which it is willing to set aside for governmental purposes. The current estimates of the total amount of wealth and income available here are, of course, rough approximations at the best. If we assume, as some have in recent months, that the income of the country is now represented by about $50,000,000,000 to $55,000,000,000, while the total tax burden — federal, state, and municipal — is estimated at perhaps $12,500,000,000, we have a situation in which about one fourth of our national income is being taken for public purposes. Roughly speaking, this means that of every dollar which the citizen receives about 25 cents is taken from him, either in direct or in indirect exactions (sometimes made through the medium of an increase in the price of necessities, due to our heightening of costs of production, through taxation).

Congress, for example, has just adopted a piece of legislation designed to change the basis of corporate taxation so as to bring the so-called surpluses of corporations within the scope of present income taxation. The eventual significance of this step is, of course, still further to confuse our conceptions of income and capital and to carry further the disposition of Congress to levy its taxes upon capital accumulation when it is nominally attempting to enlarge income taxes. In this, as in other cases, the danger involved is not so much that of an overexaction of public wealth as it is the reduction of those portions of wealth which would otherwise be set aside for the purpose of rebuilding plants and giving employment to labor.

We have set forth, in brief terms, only a few of the serious questions which present themselves in connection with the tax and debt problem, but enough has been said to show that no simple answer can be given to the queries now raised as to the ability of the country to tax or borrow. What we may be sure of is that, as things stand, we have already gone beyond the limit, both of taxation and of borrowing, that is safe and wise for the nation as a whole; and that in order to enlarge it we must make up our minds to great changes, both in average consumption or in cost of living and in conditions of employment. It is possible for our nation or any other to do either or both of these things. The question is not one of possibility but of desirability and of public advantage.

II—America Has Only Scratched Her Resources

by **ROBERT H. JACKSON**

THE CAMPAIGN opens with the cry of, "Wolf!" Candidate Knox talks of a "rendezvous with a receiver for the Treasury." Opposition leaders who promise a tight financial policy in loose language and seek to impress the country with their patriotism by slandering the nation's credit are trying to capitalize an honest anxiety which Mr. Willis expresses and many share.

Of course no thrifty-minded person views an increase of the public debt with satisfaction, and no sensible official favors spending public funds to a greater extent than conditions imperatively require. It is equally true that no influential person should disregard or discount the factors in the present situation which give reason for confidence in our present national financial soundness and stability. Disregard of such factors gives a picture of the national economy as distorted and false as the picture in the mind of the person who believes in unrestricted spending. Neither can lead to any solution because each picture is distorted and unrealistic. Both result in a vague worry which obscures the problem instead of clarifying it. Thus Mr. Willis, after expressing his anxiety, can only ask the question: "How far will the increase in debt continue?" He can give no

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hint of the answer. This means that he cannot frankly face the problem of the balance of necessary expenditures and available revenue which will be before any administration, whether Republican or Democratic, for the next few years.

The answer to the question proposed by Mr. Willis can be given only by events. The problem will continue until rising revenues and declining expenditures meet. The solution can be found only by taking an accurate account of the asset side as well as the debit side of the ledger. This is true of a private corporation when it is called on to meet a necessary expenditure. It is equally true of the government.

If we take a realistic view of the present situation, we find little to justify Mr. Willis' querulous anxiety. There is every reason to believe that the meeting between rising revenue and declining expenditure is not far away.

Since Mr. Willis' article was written, the Treasury report for July, 1936, has become available. The deficit incurred in July, 1936, is actually less than the July deficit for 1928 or any July since.

The favorable showing for a normally deficient month is due to repayment, by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Commodity Credit Corporation, and three other agencies, of about $241,000,000 in excess of debits. This month is not typical, and optimists are inclined to claim too much for it. It does, however, discredit the pessimistic assumptions of Mr. Willis and support Secretary Morgenthau's assurance that the New Deal deficit is in substantial part represented by prudent investment.

II

MR. WILLIS' second question is: "How far is the nation likely to be able to carry further increments of debt?"

No figure can fairly be assigned as a limit to a variable that responds to changes in economic and even psychological influences. The fairest answer must take the form of a condition or ratio, and a formula which seems to sum up all factors may be offered.

The limit is reached whenever an increase in tax rates or a new tax levy *fails to produce an increase in revenue.* When a tax increase meets with diminishing returns, then and not until then can we say that a government is financially embarrassed.

By this test our government passed the low point of its credit in 1932 and 1933. By the revenue act of 1932 the government tried to increase its inadequate revenues by raising corporation and individual income taxes and by adding a gift tax and manufacturers' excise taxes.

But the revenue response was a further decline in total collections. From $2,800,000,000 in 1931 they fell to $1,886,000,000 in 1932 and again to $1,871,000,000 in 1933. The Administration had lost control of its revenues. The tax structure seemed to rest on quicksand, and the heavier we made the load the faster the foundations crumbled. The reason for the failure of revenues to respond to tax increases is illustrated by the corporation income tax.

In 1929 the tax on corporate income yielded $1,193,000,000 and in 1931 only $398,993,000. This helped to unbalance the budget of the Hoover Administration and stirred the government. The revenue act of 1932 upped the corporation rate of 12 per cent to 13¾ per cent. But, while the 12-per-cent rate had produced about $398,000,000 in 1931, the 13¾-per-cent rate produced only $286,000,000 in 1932. The reason was that the number of paying corporations in 1932 was only about one half of those paying in 1931, and their aggregate taxable income was a billion and a half less. The corporation tax had struck diminishing returns. Federal credit and spending power, in so far as it rested on that tax, was exhausted.

Failure of nominal tax increases actually to produce added revenues was a most discouraging indication, as the Hoover Administration came to its close. The very earnestness of Mr. Hoover's effort to balance his budget made his failure the more ominous. Even so, I do not believe we faced bankruptcy. The resources of our government and of our people were not exhausted even then. But that desperate hour affords a yardstick by which to measure opposition claims about this administration's financial position.

Sharp reversal of this trend toward financial disaster is illustrated in the corporation income-tax returns filed to December 31, 1935 (the last available), as contrasted with those of 1932. The rate of taxation on corporations was again increased, and the response was not a

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decline but an increase in revenue from $286,000,000 to $586,000,000. The 82,000 taxpaying corporations had increased to 145,000. The corporation taxable net income of $2,100,000,000 had grown to $4,200,000,000.

The same upward trend was apparent in tax returns of individuals for 1935 (as filed August 31, 1935 — the last figures available). Net taxable income shown in 1932 of $7,900,000,000 had become $12,400,000,000, and the tax liability of $329,900,000 increased to $506,400,000.

There is no large debt or small debt, except as related to the resources available for payment. One man may owe a million dollars and be solvent, another owe a thousand and be bankrupt. The significant financial information is ratios and trends. The prophets of disaster publish only the liability side of the ledger.

The most significant measure of the debt of the Roosevelt Administration is this: The Roosevelt debt is *less*, per dollar of revenue, than the Hoover debt was.

June 30, 1932, showed revenues from taxes and customs of $1,888,000,000 and a gross national debt of $19,487,000,000. For each dollar of Hoover revenue there was owing $10.32 of debt.

June 30, 1936, showed revenues from taxes and customs of $3,890,000,000 and a gross debt of $33,779,000,000. For each dollar of Roosevelt revenue there is only $8.66 of debt. Our debt today is actually smaller in proportion to revenue backing than the debt in the closing days of the Hoover Administration.

While the average interest rate on the whole public debt in February, 1933, was 3.40 per cent, it had been reduced by June 30, 1936, to 2.56 per cent. The result is that it requires but a trifle more of the present revenues to carry the whole present debt than it was costing Mr. Hoover's administration to carry his debt. So, judged either by cost to carry or by revenues available, the present debt compares favorably with the debt of 1932. The last three years of the Hoover Administration, to March 3, 1933, produced a deficit of $6,220,000,000, which piled up the public debt by $5,060,000,000 net. This increased debt, not mentioned by Mr. Willis, was added at high interest cost and in the face of declining revenues. The Roosevelt deficits are supported by increasing revenues and subject to low interest costs.

III

How much water can be taken out of a well? It depends on the rate of replenishment. So with the tax that can be taken out of the national income. Mr. Willis speaks of a present "income of the country" of $50,000,000,000 to $55,000,000,000 per year. For governmental fiscal policy, I prefer as a barometer only taxable income reported by individuals and corporations. They may be overmodest — the modesty of some men about their taxable income is shocking — but they are solid. One thing our financiers have never watered is their income-tax returns.

Taxable income reported was, in round figures, in 1929, $32,000,000,000; 1932, $10,000,000,000; 1935, $16,000,000,000. While two thirds of our national taxable income disappeared during the administration of President Hoover, it increased 60 per cent during the first half of President Roosevelt's administration; and the increase continues.

In weighing the effect of a debt a vital consideration is whether its proceeds replenished national income and added to national resources. In that respect the debt Mr. Roosevelt incurred contrasts wholly in his favor with that which he inherited. A policy which raised a billion dollars to finance the banks of the country through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation does not have the exhausting effect of a policy which raised the same billion dollars to be shot to pieces on the battlefields of Europe. No one could compare a billion dollars spent in American public works with a billion dollars loaned to Europe. Repayment of debt that represents investment in added resources will be easier than payment for the proverbial dead horse.

Like Mr. Willis, I do not know the limit of taxation or the peak of our possible national debt. I strongly suspect that the limit is one which would recede as we approached it, if we approached it under real necessity. America has not begun to test her strength.

In addition to all tangible values, is not the government today entitled to a "going concern" value which had all but disappeared the day Mr. Roosevelt took the oath?

Who would go back to the days of 1932 and 1933, even if he could have them on a tax-free basis? There are things worse than taxes.

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Anne Douglas Sedgwick's Letters

A Portrait Chosen and Edited by Basil de Sélincourt

The Little French Girl by Anne Douglas Sedgwick, has a fine, sure observation and a tensile artistry that give this novel a lasting place in literature. At the same time its joyous interpretation of British love versus French l'amour *made the book instantly popular, and it was America's best seller for two successive years. Old* FORUM *readers can claim prior rights to the selections published in this issue from the engaging correspondence of the author of* The Little French Girl, *for it was in* THE FORUM *that the novel first appeared as a serial in 1924.*

The proceeds from the book supplied funds to remodel Miss Sedgwick's English home in the Cotswolds. Here at "Far End" in Kingham village, Oxfordshire, she and her husband, the critic Basil de Sélincourt, graciously received the Editor in 1925. He treasures a sheaf of notes in her lovely script from before and after that meeting. In one of them she wrote that THE FORUM *"m'a porté bonheur."*

The letters printed here will appear in A Portrait in Letters *of Anne Douglas Sedgwick, soon to be published by Houghton Mifflin Company. We thank the publishers for their generous permission, as well as the editor of the letters, Mr. Basil de Sélincourt.*

To *MISS KATHERINE DUNHAM*

Forest Park Hotel
Brockenhurst, Hants
December 15th, 1908

MY DEAREST KATHERINE,

I wanted to cable my great news to you on Friday, when I and Basil were married, but a cable is such a heartless sort of thing and I'm sure you'd rather have the first news in a letter. I became engaged to Basil a little more than a fortnight ago. Considering the peculiar and in many ways painful circumstances of his first marriage, we felt that it would be easier for everyone concerned — and more really dignified on our part — to have ours as quickly and as quietly as possible. There are many sad things to face and one of them is, of course, the inevitable distress of my dear ones. I felt that I could not face their protests and their pain for the length of a normal engagement and I was quite sure of my own determination, so that I only told them of it shortly before. We are here now in the New Forest and I am getting the dearest letters from my astounded friends!

On Friday we go home, and Xmas week I spend with the dear family in London. I am so glad to think that you saw my Basil and 'took to' him, I have 'taken to' him exceedingly!

You will I know understand and forgive a short letter, dear. You will find, my darling friend, that I shall remain as much as ever

Your NANNIE

I am very happy. Tell my friends.

To *MRS. JAMES PITMAN*

Far End
Wednesday,
August 19th, 1914

MY DEAREST,

Every omen points to triumph — doesn't it, and I feel that one of the most beautiful of such omens is that women like you, whose treasures are gone to this splendid war of wars, can go on sanely picking plums and raspberries. Dear Hugo! what a perfect young soldier he will make. So many of the finest types in Britain one feels are *meant* for a crisis like this. Liège will go down in history like the Seven against Thebes or the Pass of Thermopylae, wont' it; it seems dreadful to think that we sit securely here thus far because of their dreadful sufferings and heroism. How *amazed* the Germans must have been all through; — shock after shock; they evidently didn't *dream* that England would leave neutrality, though I hear that poor Lichnowsky, who sincerely longed for friendship with us, made himself very *suspect* and unpopular by warning Germany that we should *not* remain neutral. I am terribly sorry for all the gentle, homely, kindly, scholarly German *people*, tricked into believing that Germany is guiltless and the victim of aggression from barbarian hordes of Cossacks — to whom perfidious Albion is giving aid. Think of noble old Harnack saying that England, in delivering Germany over to Muscovite hordes, is a traitor to her race! and you see that not a mention of the Belgian neutrality question

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has been made in any German newspaper! What will they think if they ever really read our White Paper? You've read it of course: the most thrilling document in history I should think. How glorious the complete unity of the nation is; and Oumie Hall and I were agreeing yesterday that, if on the one hand the protestors against enlarging the navy must own themselves to have been completely mistaken, the Unionists who predicted a rebel and treacherous Ireland must do so no less. One hopes that, after such a *lifting* and such a trying in the crucible, people can never again sink to quite such levels of squabbling and misunderstanding.

Do write when you've time, my darling Mima.

Your always loving

B.

To *MRS. JOHN HUDSON BENNETT*

Far End
March 9th, 1915

DEAREST KATIE,

The first of your delightful letters reached me just as I was moving off to London and during my packed fortnight there I hadn't a moment to answer them. I agree with them all — England's bland ignorance of America is often equally amusing and vexatious to me, and English complacency is so often sustained by ingenuous, kind-hearted Americans full of admiration for things here.

I had a delightful evening with Sir Edward Grey at the Glenconners, just the four of us, and we went to a play afterwards. He talked more about birds than about the war, but in what he did say I felt him very calm and secure and *good;* the quality of *character* in him has so increased since I last met him that it has become a sort of power; for I never felt him before to have much power. He was charming about birds; very much excited about our Willow-tit and our Marsh Warbler (neither of which he's ever seen and both of which he almost suspected of being mere artificial distinctions in Marsh-tit and *Reed* Warblers) and then he was very funny, when we were expressing our adoration of 'Long-tailed-Tits' and Lord Glenconner said that he thought them rather restless birds — his humorous reproaches to Lord G. 'You will be known, Eddie, as The Man who dislikes Long-tailed Tits,' — and the joke went on all evening — 'After all, what can you expect of a man who finds fault with Long-tailed Tits?'

I lunched with the Ian Hamiltons (he is Commander in Chief of the Home Defence Army) and Sir Ian was very interesting about the German and Russian struggle, as he has been to manoeuvres in just the dreadful, boggy country and told us a great deal about it. Interesting talks, too, with Lady Gosford, one of whose boys is now in the Dardanelles engagement. But one of the most charming things I saw and heard was dear old Henry James talking — pure Jacobean! — to three wounded Tommies at Fanny Prothero's at tea! — so intent, so reverent, so paternal he was, his back bowed and his hand on their shoulders, and one could see that though he bewildered them he didn't *frighten* them! One of these same darling Tommies told me about the wonderful Xmas day truce in the trenches and of how *eight* Germans came over to their trench, looked into them, *got* into them, and *stayed* there!

We've had so much trouble about our poor dear Belgians since they left us. It was then revealed to me by the nurse (who came in to see Julie several mornings during that illness of hers in her first week here) that said illness was a miscarriage! And you'll remember how I told you of our gravely bearing her up to Birmingham to be examined by a specialist!

Well, I must stop now, dear. Do write again soon.

Your loving

NANNIE

To *MRS. JOHN HUDSON BENNETT*

Annexe de l'hôpital 43*bis*
Veules-les-Roses
Seine Inférieure
France
February 28th, 1916

DEAREST KATHERINE,

What has become of you? I've had only one letter from you since we came to France, — and that was months ago. I forget how much of our setting and *train de vie* I told you about; — the dear little place itself, I think, the vast serene landscape, the cliffs and sea, and Dieppe, 19 miles away, our chief marketing centre. We go on just the same, very happy and busy, our staff much shrunken as we found that our

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convalescents didn't really need all the skilled attention we'd brought, so that our professional nurses have moved nearer to the front and, just at present, until another rush of bad cases comes, Ethel and I dress the wounds ourselves, stumps, cuts, holes; it is *so* much more satisfactory doing something really personal for the dear, patient, cheerful lambs besides merely sweeping out their wards. Basil, meanwhile, has become a sort of patron-saint of Veules; in addition to his work here he is Electrician to the Commune! and all the lighting, not only of this hospital, but of the little town, depends on him; then he has mended, as far as it *can* be, the lovely old organ in the lovely old church here (I don't think it has been mended since the days of Bach!) and plays it at High Mass on Sunday! — greatly to the dear little Curé's satisfaction.

The centre of our stage is a wonderful old French woman, the Comtesse de Cabarus, a Bretonne, *81*, still beautiful, with silver hair and tragic blue eyes and an austere profile, and a brilliant, extremely *un-austere* tongue. She can out-talk, and *out-walk!* — any of us! She is a wonderful musician, singing with amazing pathos and drama and passion and playing everything (within certain limits) by ear. She and Basil fell desperately in love with each other — at sight — and he is still charmed and endlessly amused by her. In leisure moments she is translating my 'Carnations' into French, — rather to my dismay, as it involves me in having to spend long hours with her trying to explain to her *exactly* what I mean by this or that! As a matter of fact she'll never understand what I mean! Such funny chasms reveal themselves constantly between our minds.

Well, Katie dear, there you have me up to date, and now please write *at once* and tell me all about yourself and John. What news have you of Meg and of dear Mrs. Stickney? What do you hear of little James?

Ever so much love, dear.

Your fond

NANNIE

To *MRS. JAMES PITMAN*

Veules-les-Rose
October 28th, 1916

DEAREST,

Your letter has just come and I'm *very* happy

From a portrait by Cecilia Beaux, Courtesy Houghton Mifflin Co.

— though filled with remorse for my unjust grief! I never had that letter from you! I hate to think of having missed it, and here, as a result, is a whole year of silence between us, and how can it ever be filled up? The little photographs are lovely, in the one with Hugo on the steps you are supposed to be his *fiancée*. I can imagine, my poor darling, what Hugo's deafness must be to you, and yet your thankfulness that it *saves* him for you. One really begins to feel that every young creature one has ever heard of is going to be killed.

Well, my dear, where to begin; — where I am, I may as well. Hilda Trevelyan is here at present, and she and I do all the nursing part and Nan house-keeps and is quite marvellous with the dear men. We have 28 at a time and they go through pretty quickly now, as Dr. Fitch isn't supposed to keep cases that he can't guarantee to send back to the front in a month. We get them when they are up and out of bed; but we have fine large holes and barely healed stumps to deal with and it takes us 3½ hours of pretty hard work every morning, dressing and bandaging the wounds. I'm nurse one morning and Hilda my *sterilizing* assistant, and the next day we reverse roles and it is much more restful. I've been doing the 'pro' work

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for months now, to Ethel's nurse, and before she went she trained us in the more direct duties. We've never, since we came, been so busy as just lately and the big bandaging of thighs and bodies becomes a sort of callisthenics. This last batch has afforded us a grim amusement, in the number of wounded buttocks and inner groins with which it's presented us so that, as I tell Hilda, we look like parrots creeping up-side down round their cages as we explore up the legs of our patient, usually, poor fellow, placed before us in much the attitude of a person about to turn a somersault.

It is extraordinary how, with hardly an exception in this long year of an endless procession, they are all such dear, merry, patient creatures; so sweet and grateful — grateful to a pathetic degree. Well, in the afternoons there are instruments to polish and prepare and dressings to make (a large item) and a walk to take: I can't tell you what the beauty of this place has meant to me. I have never *lived* with such beauty. My favourite cliff walk, at every season, is a fresh intoxication every day; and all the inland loveliness, and the orchards in Spring, and the thatched old cottages with irises growing along their ridges. In spite of everything it has been full of happiness, to be seeing it all, and seeing it with Basil.

And oh! Mima, our little Carmen! There is a volume there! rather a sad one, in a war, for *how* we've loved that enchanting, lovely, cool-hearted child! I think the poor old grandmother really hoped we'd take her back to England! But what has now happened is the most suitable and wisest thing, dear Nan and Ethel having undertaken for three years to pay for her education at the best Paris convent. I can give you no idea of Carmen; such dignity and grace and haughtiness, and something much more than beauty. Something in the expression of her lovely eyes reminds me very much of Olivia.

Before I stop I must give you a jewel of a story told to us by a pretty little New Yorker who was nursing this summer at St. Valéry. Friends of hers had a place in the invaded provinces and, after the Germans had taken possession, they had a long letter telling all about it from the housekeeper Frenchwoman who had been left in charge of the chateau. She said that the Germans had behaved very well; they had eaten a good many chickens, but had paid for them all, and they had drunk a good deal of wine, but paid for that, and that on the whole there was little damage to complain of. Then she signed herself, your respectful *serviteur* etc., and there followed a postscript: 'J'ai oublié de dire à Madame qu'ils m'ont violée trois fois.'

! ! !

What think you of that! Sworn to as fact by the friend — who had *seen* the letter.

Well, goodbye, my dear and innocent woman. *Do* write. — How is *your* hair? Mine is stopping in all right but is certainly whiter. My clothing since coming here has consisted of my uniform, one tweed skirt, brought with me, and divers woollies!

Your loving

NANNIE

TO *MRS. JAMES PITMAN*

Far End
March 21st, 1925

Dearest,

I'm lying in bed prostrated after a virulent attack of 'flu.' Basil is prone in the next room and Rose the maid has withdrawn, also felled, to her own home. So it's like Mrs. Fellowes's story about the parrot: 'It's a weary worrold, Mrs. Murray.' As a matter of fact, however, I'm enjoying it. Basil says such funny things and keeps me laughing, and your lovely cap adorns my faded poll, and cheques for £1,000 lie loosely about (they now expect the miraculous book to sell 500,000 copies!) You know it seems that I shall be a *rich* woman, my lamb; it really makes one look forward to dying to have so much money to *leave!* Imagine that I've just been paid £400 to secure the mere serial rights for my next novel — at *£5,000!* If they find they *don't* want it I still keep the £400!! But there's no end to it. I lie passive and the plums rain down on my idle head. — A little *disgraced* though — as if one were a Cinema star.

I've had several pleasant jaunts to London. — I think I told you of one or two: staying with Lady Gosford, Leo and Elsie and Adèle Chapin (for the concert of our wonderful blind pianist. — Kay, Basil and I all went up). The two people I've met who have made most impression on me are Arnold Bennett (a little

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treasure!) and Lord Hugh Cecil (a lamb-cat!). What a pair!

Fondest love from

Your devoted

NANNIE

To *MRS. VICTOR GOODMAN*

Castelamare
March 22nd, 1932

DEAREST JULIAN,

What a glorious fat letter, full of all the news that I wanted to hear! I am so pleased that your baby is called Philip, one of my favourite boys' names; so much so that if I had had a boy I think I should have called him Philip, only I don't think it would have gone very well with de Sélincourt.

The two main influences in our life here are the majestic presence of the sea, which looks in on us all day long and all night too, and the two darling little Italian maids, who, with all their families surging in and out, provide us with a great deal of colour. They are the most lovable creatures and I shall hate to leave them, — and I ought to add as a third presence the admirable French doctor who is slowly, I believe, cranking up my poor machine so that I hope to be able to run along the level, even if slowly and pantingly, some day again.

Tell your mother that I *have* met Edith Wharton, twice. She came to tea with us when we first settled here, and it touched me to see her again, as the last time had been in New York, nearly thirty years ago; and then I went to tea with her at her friend's here, Lady Johnstone's. I like her very much — she is a gentle, quiet, meditative person, and she has a little pekinese that reminds me of your darling Ming. She wants us to stop and see her at Hyères on our way north when we go, and perhaps we shall be able to manage it.

We have just come back from spending a fortnight with my sister-in-law, Muriel Lee Matthews, at her lovely place at Gairaut in the hills above Nice. It is an extraordinary contrast to our monotonous outlook here — a terrace flower garden where we sat under orange trees in the sunlight, and woods full of irises, and a lovely Virgilian-looking farm in the middle distance, and cypresses and pines, and groves of olive-trees descending towards the sea. I never saw a more beautiful view. After our withered winter, with only central heating to warm us, it was delicious having tea by a pleasant fire of olive wood, surrounded by violets and jonquils; and every evening Muriel played to us.

In my walk along the sea wall this afternoon I met our neighbours the Clewses, for whom I have a real fondness, for amongst all their splendours and absurdities they give me an impression of being happy, hardworking people; that is to say, that he works hard at his art, and she finds the meaning of life very fully in contemplating and adoring. They are rather an amusing-looking couple as one sees them out walking — she tall and graceful and rather lovely in the latest fashions and he really looking rather like an old tramp in a crushed, disreputable hat and overcoat, with the loose white collar of his sculptor's blouse protruding in front.

I feel sure that I should dislike 'Magnolia Street' intensely. I have been aware of the succulent talent of that young man for some time in the Manchester Guardian, and never liked it. I wonder if you and your mother were as dismally disappointed in Charles Morgan's 'The Fountain' as I was? After the paeans of praise from every quarter, among which I have not heard a single dissentient voice, I was quite bewildered, as I thought it one of the deadest books I have ever read — not only its characters, but even the descriptions, embalmed in a sort of pretentious elaboration. He has a great many of Meredith's most exasperating characteristics with absolutely none of his robustness and vitality. I place it with 'Rough Justice,' by C. E. Montague, as the novel I have most disliked — among novels, I mean, on the plane of taking seriously.

Tell Victor that his little p.s. was very much appreciated by us both. I am afraid I feel, Victor, after the terrible exhibition of this Lindbergh baby kidnapping, that I agree with you about England being the only respectable country left, but then I think that almost all Americans of character and discernment would feel the same.

Ever so much love to you both,

from

ANNE

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Health Insurance and the Doctor

British Physicians Learn to Like It

by **I. S. FALK**

In America health insurance is still very much in the stage of vision and prophecy. We face the tremendous problems involved. We count the depredations of sickness. But so far we have done little in concert except study and appraise the various plans in vogue in different countries.

In studying health insurance as it is employed and governed in Great Britain today we attempt merely to show a plan that is working; that has been formulated and adapted to fit certain characteristics and problems of the society it serves. In the case of Great Britain we have for study a plan that has the overwhelming support and approval of the public. As for the British doctors, the records of the medical association and the expressions of individual doctors show that not one in twenty of those engaged in insurance practice would voluntarily give it up. Or, to state it in a colloquialism coined and current in the medical profession itself, "You couldn't blast the doctors off insurance practice with dynamite."

To say that health insurance is generally misunderstood is to state a simple, unvarnished fact. Health insurance is not, as some mistakenly believe, a system of medical practice. It is simply a logical method of meeting the costs of medical care, a plan to spread the hazards of illness more broadly over both time and the working population and thus lessen the economic shock of illness on the individual.

It is this shock of sickness costs upon the individual that constitutes one of our gravest social problems. Sickness is the cloud that hangs over the family, engulfing the individual unit when it descends. When we consider that, of all the families normally forced to seek public or private charity, between one third and two thirds are so driven by sickness, we begin to comprehend the magnitude of the problem.

For centuries people have wrestled with the problem. They have devised various methods to furnish protection against the economic specter that accompanies sickness. And, of all methods devised, health insurance is the one extensively applied.

II

Compulsory health insurance in Great Britain came into being with the National Insurance Act in 1911. Subsequently modified in many details, the essential provisions have remained unchanged. In 1925 certain features of health insurance were united to the system of contributory old-age pensions, thus linking more closely the methods of dealing with the interwoven problems of the temporary cessation of wages due to sickness and the permanent cessation of income due to retirement.

The British law is unequivocal. It requires all persons who are 16 years of age or over to become insured if they are employed in manual labor. The man who works at nonmanual labor and earns less than £250 (about $1,250) a year must also subscribe to the plan. The plan blankets about 18,400,000 persons in England, Scotland, and Wales. This is about 40 per cent of the population, or about 80 per cent of those gainfully employed.

Spread over the insured persons, their employers, and the country at large, the costs to the individual are supportable. Each male insured pays the equivalent of 9 cents a week. The female pays 8 cents. The employer contributes another 9 cents for each employee, regardless of sex. He deducts the employee's share from wages, pays both contributions by purchasing special stamps at the post office, and affixes the stamps to the employee's card.

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The post office periodically transfers its collections to the National Insurance Fund. The government then adds its quota: (a) one seventh of the costs of benefits and of local administration for males; (b) one fifth of the same costs for females; and (c) the whole cost of central administration.

The administration of membership and benefits is entrusted to the so-called Approved Societies, subject to the supervision of the Minister of Health in England and Wales and of the Board of Health in Scotland. These Approved Societies are mutual self-governing associations of insured persons. They are not operated for profit. Their constitutions invest complete control in the hands of their insured members. The insured chooses the society he wishes to join. Every six months he turns over to his Society his card with its stamps. The Society sends it to the Ministry of Health, and is credited with the membership and the contributions made on behalf of the member.

The law guarantees the insured person 4 benefits: (1) medical attention and treatment, prescribed medicines and appliances; (2) sickness benefits — cash payments covering a period of from 4 weeks of disability up to 26 weeks, such payments varying from 10 to 15 shillings ($2.50 to $3.75) a week; (3) disablement benefits — continuation of the sickness benefits when these are exhausted, at one-half rate and payable during the term of disability until the insured person recovers, dies, or becomes eligible for his pension at the age of 65; (4) maternity benefit — a lump sum of 40 or 80 shillings ($10–$20), depending on whether the woman or only her husband is insured. The Approved Societies distribute the cash benefits.

Medical benefit is administered by an entirely separate agency, the Insurance Committee. This separation of administrations, a departure from the original plan submitted by Mr. Lloyd George, came in response to the demand of the medical profession that medical benefit should not be administered under the Approved Societies.

One Insurance Committee was created for each county or county borough. These committees include members representing insured persons, the local county councils, the local physicians, and the Ministry of Health.

The law, very justly, provides for so-called *additional* benefits, which may be furnished by the Approved Societies out of surplus funds which they may accumulate. Most common of these additional benefits are additions to cash benefits and partial payments toward the cost of certain special treatment benefits — dental, eye, or other care.

The inclusion of these provisions is perhaps more significant from an economic than a legislative angle. Of even greater economic significance is the fact that there have consistently been such surpluses. In every year since the inauguration of the system, with the exception of 1927 and 1929, receipts have exceeded expenditures.

A glance at the latest (1934) health-insurance balance sheet for England is highly interesting. At the beginning of that year there was a surplus of $534,000,000. Income from contributions was $110,000,000, from Parliamentary grants $25,000,000, and from interest and other sources $26,000,000, a total of $161,000,000. Expenditures during the year were as follows:

Cash benefits	$73,000,000	49 per cent
Medical services	52,000,000	35 " "
Administration	23,000,000	16 " "

The surplus of income over expenditures amounted to $13,000,000. The accumulated surplus therefore increased to $547,000,000 at the end of the year.

In the face of charges of insolvency made (in America) against the British health-insurance plan, the figures quoted are illuminating. The fact is that, even in periods of economic upheaval, health insurance in Great Britain has gone ahead with its piling up of an accumulated surplus that today equals about 3 years' operating expenses. And this in the face of decreasing support from tax funds. The total Parliamentary votes and grants declined from $36,000,000 in 1925 to $28,000,000 in 1934. In the face of such figures charges of insolvency are palpably absurd.

III

When Mr. Lloyd George first submitted his health-insurance bill to Parliament he proposed that medical care as well as cash benefits should be furnished by the Approved Societies. The Societies were to make arrangements with doctors and pay for their services. But the British Medical Association had studied the subject and knew what it wanted. It balked at the idea of what it considered a

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perpetuation under health insurance of those features of voluntary-contract (annual payment) practice to which they had long been objecting.

The Medical Association submitted its program of "six cardinal points," which the government largely accepted and incorporated into the proposed bill. In other words, the Association accepted the principle of compulsory insurance. Its objections applied only to certain details of administration.

Perhaps the most important result of the physicians' proposals was the establishment of the Health Committees, later to be called the Insurance Committees, for the administration of medical care. The bill was also modified to guarantee (a) the right of every legally qualified physician to undertake the medical care of insured persons if he wishes to do so; (b) the free choice of physician by the patient; (c) active participation of the physician in the administration of medical benefits; and (d) freedom of the physician to choose within certain broad limits the method of his remuneration. The act as finally passed included these provisions and remains the law to this day.

Every doctor is free to come into the insurance practice or stay out as he chooses. In England and Wales alone some 16,000 physicians, or 45 per cent of the total of all physicians, have chosen to come in. And that percentage becomes more impressive when we consider that specialists and others are outside the field covered by the insurance plan but are figured in that total.

The procedure where physicians are concerned is simple. The qualified physician who wishes to engage in insurance practice notifies the local Insurance Committee to this effect. The Committee must then enter his name on the local list, which is posted prominently in the community. If any insured person wishes to choose that particular doctor he may do so, subject to the doctor's agreement.

On the other hand, the physician is not restricted by his insurance practice. The British plan of health insurance, unlike most other national plans, is limited in all its benefits to gainfully occupied persons. No provision is made for their families. The doctor chosen by the insured person thus normally is chosen to furnish medical care for the rest of the family on the usual private-fee basis.

The essential effect of health insurance upon the relations between doctor and insured patient is to remove the financial consideration. The insured person chooses his doctor without regard to fee. The doctor is paid not by his patient but by the Insurance Committee. Thus the relationship is strictly professional.

The economic effect on the physician can be computed in dollars and cents. A physician may accept, as a maximum, 2,500 insured persons. If he has that many on his list he earns an average of $5,500 a year. But the average insurance doctor has 1,000 on his list, with average earnings of about $2,250. On top of this are his mileage allowances and other supplementary payments.

In addition, the average practitioner earns from his private practice about $2,000 or more. Thus the average earnings among general practitioners in Great Britain compare very favorably with the average earnings of the same class serving industrial populations in the United States.

Continuing with the figures at hand, other interesting facts appear. The records show that the average insurance doctor sees about one half the persons on his list during the year. He gives, in his office and in patients' homes, about 3.5 services per person on his list, or about 7 services per person attended. Allowing 300 working days a year, he averages 4 house visits and 8 office consultations per working day. The remuneration for this work is guaranteed. The same unequivocal figures shed more illumination. The average British doctor in private practice among wage earners charges no more — but he collects less.

There is, however, one fly in the ointment. Desirable as was the separation of cash benefits from medical benefits, a definite loophole was left in the whole scheme. The Approved Societies assign the cash benefits. The Insurance Committees pay the medical benefits. But the doctor who attends the sick person is the same doctor who must certify when the insured is unable to work. The certificate of disability, filed by the patient with his Society, starts in motion the machinery through which he collects his cash benefits. And the doctor who attends him must sign his certificate.

While there is no doubt that in Great Britain most doctors and patients play fair, the loophole does exist. And it is equally certain that

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there are abuses. The patient, anxious to collect his cash benefit, holds a potential threat over the doctor. If the certificate is refused the patient may change to another doctor more lenient in the granting of certificates.

While it is difficult to measure such things, there is no doubt that the "free choice of doctor" is exercised by many patients with an eye on the doctor's reputation for liberality in the issuance of certificates.

However, the Approved Societies have a protection of their own. If a Society has doubts about the disability of a member it may call for an independent examination. This examination is made by an officer of the Regional Medical Staff — salaried doctors employed by the Ministry of Health. In 1934 there were in England 468,000 requests for re-examination.

The results of these examinations were interesting. When the Regional Medical Officers notified patients to appear for examination — and the patient's doctor was also notified of the examination — 135,000 were reported to have received a "final" certificate, terminating the period of disability before the day fixed for the examination; 246,000 were examined; and 87,000 failed to attend "for other reasons." Of those examined, incapacity for work was confirmed in 179,000 cases.

There are other checks on overcertification. But there remains the problem which a dual function places upon the doctor. He must treat the sick and issue certificates of disability. The conjunction is obviously not sound. One gathers in Great Britain that if the whole system were redesigned in the light of experience there would be a more drastic separation of the doctor's role in these two functions.

IV

WHAT DO the British doctors think about health insurance? What of the quality of medical care? What of the personal relations between doctor and patient?

The medical profession itself can best answer such queries. In 1928, endorsing the continuance of medical benefits, the British Medical Association gave as its reasons, among others, the following:

> Large numbers, indeed whole classes of persons are now receiving a real medical attention which they formerly did not receive at all.
>
> The amount and character of the medical attention given is superior to that formerly given in the best of the old clubs, and immensely superior to that given in the great majority of the clubs which were far from the best.
>
> Illness is now coming under skilled observation and treatment at an earlier stage than was formerly the case.

Again, in 1930, the British Medical Association thoroughly reinvestigated the entire subject. It proposed answers to many existing problems in the medical provisions of health insurance. It proposed a wider scope of medical benefits, the enlarging of the field of the insured population so as to include the dependents of insured persons, and also the consolidation of the administration of insurance medicine with other medical services. There was nothing in its proposals to curtail, much less abolish, health insurance.

The position of British doctors in general and of insurance doctors in particular was stated clearly in an article, printed in 1934, written by Sir Henry B. Brackenbury, Chairman of the Council of the British Medical Association:

> On the whole, and leaving out of account for the moment those features of the British system which are not directly concerned with the provision of medical attendance and treatment, the results are beneficial to both [insured persons and physicians]: and when the expression "on the whole" is used it is not intended to imply that the benefit is just on the right side after nicely balanced consideration, but merely that there are some points of disadvantage which may be set over against an overwhelming preponderance of advantage. . . . It is acknowledged that any suggestion of the abolition of the scheme would be received by an overwhelming and emphatic protest from the profession and insured population alike.
>
> There are probably thousands of general medical practitioners today who, without the insurance scheme, would not have been able to earn by the exercise of their profession a sufficient income on which to live. . . . There is no evidence that the general quality of professional work has in any way deteriorated.

Such quotations give some idea of the attitude of British doctors to health insurance. At the same time, they are not advanced to show that the plan is perfect, that all doctors or patients praise it, or that many improvements are not needed. They do, however, indicate the common judgment rendered by those in the best position to judge. Certainly the plan itself has not developed the "dynamite" or anything else sufficiently explosive to "blast the doctors off insurance practice."

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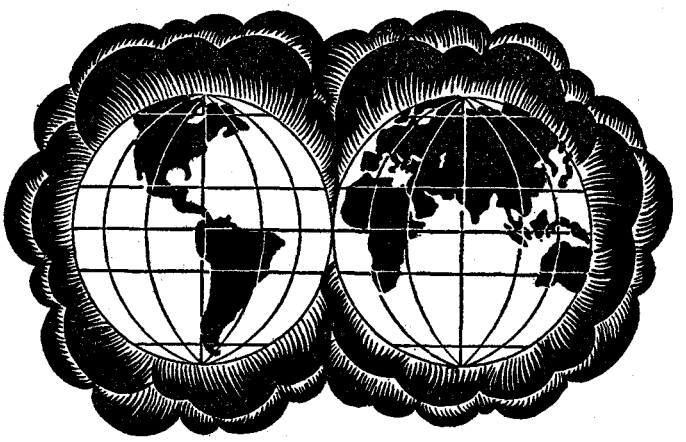
The Way to Peace



by **GEORGE LANSBURY**

I CAME to America in the middle of April on the invitation of the organizers of the Emergency Peace Campaign, to take part in a series of conferences and mass meetings on behalf of peace.

Although I came as an individual, the views I expressed are widely held in Europe and Great Britain. Men and women who profess the faith of Christ, who believe in the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man are discovering that war is a beastly and futile folly, totally opposed to the teachings of religion and is, indeed, a crime against God and humanity. Believing this, they are also realizing that words are not enough: that we must will the means to peace.

Every day that passes shows us war a more terrible master than ever before. The devilish ingenuity of man excels itself in creating fouler means for destroying and mutilating men, women, and children. We pacifists refuse to sit down quietly and allow this process to continue unchecked and without a protest. We refuse to believe the fatalistic theory that, because all other civilizations have decayed, so also must ours. Neither do we think that force and domination, greed and avarice, and all the evil which the present-day world gives us are incurable and an integral part of our human nature.

PACIFISM AND SENTIMENTALISM

THOSE WHO support war claim to be realists. They speak of pacifists as cranks and sentimentalists. But, judged by the standard of success, it is those who support a society based on force and war who are the sentimentalists. We need not ransack the pages of history to prove this. The great war which in Europe almost wiped out a generation of our youngest and best and which took a heavy toll from the young manhood of the United States and British dominions was fought to abolish militarism and autocracy and to make the world safe for democracy. We have only to look around the world and see what a foolish, sentimental dream that was. Humanity paid a terrible price in human suffering, sorrow, and death, and it never received what it paid for.

No: we Christians, like all other pacifists, are in fact practical people. Our way of life is very simple. We are neither theologians nor mere word spinners. Mankind does suffer very much from natural causes, such as floods and earthquakes, and we sympathize deeply with the victims of such catastrophes. But, taking the world as a whole, most of the sin and suffering, destitution and sorrow which daily afflict many millions in all lands is man-made.

This is especially the case when we are at war. Then we are told that every scrap of energy, every ounce of our resources must be organized to destroy our enemy. Great nations plan mighty engines of battle, create poison gas, and marshal millions of men and women in their service. Have you ever asked yourselves why similar efforts cannot be made to remove the causes of war and organize the world for service and peace? From 1914 to 1918 the whole world was divided in two divisions

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for the sole purpose of winning peace through universal slaughter. Given the will to do so, nations could be even more easily organized for co-operation and mutual service.

Neither I nor any other pacifist can show you a sign. We cannot, to use a common phrase, give you a pill to cure an earthquake. But we do ask you to keep before you the fact that the present generations of people all over the world possess the means whereby they can attain vast and ever increasing knowledge of the past. If we would understand imperialism we must try to learn the lessons which the past and forgotten empires teach us and also learn that the world we live in is now in a position to build better and safer than ever before. The world is smaller: we speak to each other across the space of thousands of miles. No frontiers, custom houses, seas, or mountain ranges hinder our communications. Only we ourselves can prevent the discussion and the hammering out of our difficulties. Surely the time has come when men and women of all races and classes should come together and with a united voice demand that our rulers shall devise the means of securing peace and abolishing war.

Europe and Asia are armed camps where no one can say how soon a spark from one country or the other may set the whole ablaze. I want my own country, together with the United States and whoever will join, to take the initiative for a mighty effort to secure peace through good will. I do not ask you to take part in war. I ask you to join in a very great endeavor to set the world free from the curse of war by being willing to become sharers of nature's bounty and co-operators in the glorious task of freeing humanity from the thralldom of jealousy, hate, greed, and fear.

The Sacrifice for Peace

We must enlist the wealth and power of both nations on behalf of reconciliation and peace. You will, like my own people, demand, if not a sign, at least a scheme to show how feasible international co-operation and peace may be. Well, during the past few years, in company with my colleagues in and out of Parliament, I have been advocating a policy which, if followed, would at least start us on the road along which we must travel. Sir Samuel Hoare, First Lord of the Admiralty, and your own Mr. Cordell Hull have both borne testimony to the need for action such as my colleagues and I have discussed.

With these thoughts in my mind I proposed recently in the British House of Commons the calling of an international conference to remove the causes of war and especially to arrange for a fairer access to raw materials and colonies by all nations. My motion, not being supported by the Government, was rejected. But it or something similar to it will have to be adopted by the nations without much delay, or a second world war will be upon us.

The proposal I made was fairly widely supported, but it was also attacked as an attempt to "give the British Empire away." That was not what I proposed, as I shall explain later; but if the nations are expecting to secure peace on a basis of giving nothing away (as my critics seemed to hope) they will secure not peace but war. In wartime we call on all citizens to make sacrifices of money, security, and life itself. We cannot expect to win peace without making certain sacrifices.

If the richer nations of the world, such as Britain, France, and America, want to retain for themselves the first or exclusive claim upon the large areas or resources which they hold, they will be called upon, sooner or later, to fight for them.

On Whom the Guilt?

Generally, the disturbers of world peace are regarded as the fascist powers, Germany and Italy, or the military dictators of Japan. Nothing that I say should be taken as a defense of these or any other cruel and brutal administrations. They are based on a glorification of force and a desire for domination. But when we of the old Allied countries put on them the sole blame for the war danger we are being unfair and self-righteous. It is our greed that is going to find us out. America, because her possessions or virtual possessions in the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific are less exposed, is not in such immediate danger as France or Britain, but it is for America to consider whether she also is not guilty.

The British Empire and France, however, with minor satellite powers like Belgium, Portugal, and Holland, unquestionably control nearly all the valuable sources of raw materials in backward or undeveloped countries. These have been acquired by the same

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means as the American colonists used to acquire the Indian lands and as Mussolini used to acquire Abyssinia — armed violence. In all the barrage of excuses which the Italian agencies have sent out to defend the indefensible attack on the Ethiopians, only one argument has struck home. It is the argument which accused the League powers of hypocrisy and stated that it was only because they had already grabbed all they could that they pretended to moral disapproval of Italy for doing the same.

Unless we can remove the reason of that reproach we shall sooner or later have war. Wars arise very largely from economic causes. We must not listen to the specious arguments of economists who pretend that colonies and dependencies are not an advantage to the owning country. The suggestion that they are held for altruistic reasons, for carrying the White Man's Burden, is pretty generally recognized now as hypocritical nonsense. Indeed, a leading British statesman once rebuked supporters of missionary societies because they imagined we colonized for the good of subject peoples. He boldly asserted that the object of all colonizing was to make money. It is perfectly true that the average working man or woman in the owning country reaps only quite indirect benefits from his "possessions." He may be inclined to boast himself a citizen of the Empire that controls the Seven Seas or some such phrase, but that does not prevent him having to live, often enough, a half-starved life in a city slum.

But if the people do not gain very great benefits from a colonial empire, certain classes within the owning country do benefit clearly, and the Italians or the Germans are perfectly right in saying that it is a plain falsehood to pretend to the contrary. The colonial administrative services provide comfortable and honorable careers for the sons of members of the governing classes. Trade may follow the flag, too: large corporations are able to make profitable arrangements for handling almost as monopolies essential products like rubber and oils and fats, while their foreign rivals are bluntly warned off. The countries which have been unlucky or late in the race for possessions are served later, if at all.

For years before the War, the British colonies had a system of partial free trade. This made things easier: other countries were at least not barred from access to essential raw materials. But now, owing to the Ottawa arrangements and the general tendency to increased nationalism, this has ended. In any case, the other big powers never pretended to a free-trade policy: they quite openly kept up tariffs so as to hold all the trade for their own citizens.

So it might seem that the simplest thing would be to call a conference for a fresh sharing of colonies and dependencies. If we were prepared to neglect altogether the question of native rights and treat the whole of Africa as so much cake to be cut up and divided, then it certainly would be. It surprises me indeed that conservative politicians who consider themselves realists and demand more armaments, on the plea of straight thinking and no sentimentality, have not already adopted this idea. It might mean a certain loss to hand out a portion of colonial property to the unsatisfied nations, but what would it come to, compared with the cost of a new war? (Even supposing the war successful, any businessman — any junior clerk indeed — can at once supply the answer.) It is a matter of bookkeeping or of simple arithmetic. If they understood their own policy at all, our militarist "realists" ought to be clamoring to hand Germany several British colonies on a plate and demanding that France do the same.

But, as I said, I do not advocate this or anything like it. It would only postpone the trouble, after all: fresh claims would certainly be made, and the area of the earth to be divided is not elastic. Furthermore, the white races, by breaking up native organizations of society, have made themselves responsible for the welfare of the inhabitants of their colonies. To hand them over to Nazi or Fascist rule might be both wicked and cowardly. It may be that American readers will think I am only showing the usual British arrogance when I suggest that our administration in the colonies is better than that of the Nazis or Fascists. I can say only that I do not believe I am. I know very well the grave faults of British rule, in Kenya and elsewhere; but I consider that these merely prove that the rights of the native require more protection, not less. They give one no excuse for treating defenseless people as so many herds of cattle to be divided up among various brawling claimants.

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Free Trade and Mandates

What I propose is the following:

A conference of all nations shall be called to arrange to make impossible any discrimination between one country's trade and another's in colonies and dependencies. Every signatory shall be bound by treaty to outlaw any distinction of nationality in customs duties, bounties, or other financial arrangements. A model act shall be drafted embodying these provisions. This would remove at once the chief grievance of the "unsatisfied" nations without doing any injury to the natives. Indeed, the natives would almost certainly be benefited.

But this will not be enough. While the administration of so many colonies remains without constraint in the hands of particular nations, there is bound to be grave suspicion of the real intentions of the rulers, no matter what treaties they sign. Trade was inclined to follow the flag even in the old free-trade days: officials have many ways of quietly favoring the entrepreneurs of their own countries, and in skilled hands such procedures can be nearly as effective as a tariff. The critics of British, French, or any other imperialism will be justified in remaining suspicious.

The solution of this problem lies in expanding and using properly a device which already exists. A number of ex-German territories are held today not as colonies but as "mandated" areas of the League of Nations. Many persons profess to see in this system a mere subterfuge, invented to save the face of Woodrow Wilson in 1919: I am sure the President thought his scheme sound, but in its operation it has been found sadly lacking in all the virtues claimed for it by the authors. Nevertheless, the mandatory nations have, to some extent, to answer for their administration. They are required to send in reports and to submit to cross-examination. Sometimes this sort of international jury has asked inconvenient questions. Even so, no one is satisfied with the present system; and already questions are being raised by some mandatory powers which seem to assume that the mandates are permanent and give the holders all the rights of ownership.

The operation of the system needs changing, as also does the whole basis on which it rests. When altered, it must be extended to all dependent countries. Those who act for the League must act as administrators for the benefit of the people who dwell in the mandated territories, and all colonial possessions should be brought under international control. An international commission should be representative of all subject peoples and chosen by them. Great nations like India, Egypt, and, so far as this can be secured, the subject peoples of Africa must have freedom of choice in determining who shall represent them.

The end we should seek to attain is one which will bring under international control the vast resources and markets of the world, together with such stabilization of methods of exchange as will eliminate speculation in money values, in order that currency will not fluctuate in value from day to day; finally, the establishment of another commission to enable the present unoccupied portions of the world to be opened up for those nations needing room for growing populations.

This is no cut and dried program but only a suggestion for the start of a discussion. The world has waited a long time to learn wisdom. Surely it is not too much to say that here, under our very eyes, is the power which, if we possess wisdom and understanding, can be used for the service of all. We need most the humility to acknowledge our past failures and the spirit to enable us to see ourselves in others and to believe that love is the one great solvent for all our ills and that love must be expressed in action through individuals and nations. This is true, because from us must come the faith which will remove mountains and the action which will demonstrate our faith.

The greatest man who ever lived talked so simply that common people heard him gladly. He went about giving expression to his creed of love and brotherhood by doing good. He told those who were to follow him to go out and preach his gospel everywhere. Two thousand years have tolled away. The Christian world today pays lip service to his life's work and worth, and yet we prepare for universal slaughter. My earnest desire as one man to thousands, nay, millions, is to ask you people of America to cast away fear, come over and help us. Let us form a chain of Christians, around the world, who shall refuse longer to bow the knee to the false gods of force and war; who shall unite to sweep away all causes of war from our lives, both as individuals and as nations.

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Pillars of Government

Robert F. Wagner, Apostle of Social Justice

by **OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD**

EVERY LOYAL hundred-per-cent American knows that the only trouble with this country is that for a century and more it left its doors wide open to immigration, so that the dregs and outcasts of Europe were dumped upon our shores. The most ardent Americanista will not admit that any good whatever came out of this vast influx of persons from the "poverty-stricken, crime- and disease-ridden" portions of Europe. But here is one fact they cannot deny: about the most useful Senator of the United States, certainly in the field of social security, is Robert F. Wagner, whose parents brought him to this country at the age of eight years.

The truth is that there are few more outstanding persons in his sphere of activity than Senator Wagner. Many New Yorkers were a bit upset when he went to the Senate. A German-American, who still lived on the East Side by choice, to take the place honored by Elihu Root? Well, after all, that place had not been much honored by Tom Platt or Chauncey Depew or many another. Mr. Root himself, brilliant as his talents and noteworthy as his record, could not represent the aspirations of the working classes, from whom he was always absolutely remote. Senator Wagner could speak for them — all those striving, teeming, backward hordes in our large cities, jammed into overcrowded slums as soon as they came through Castle Garden, and left to shift for themselves — for he was one of them. Something in Wagner has made it impossible for him to forget the struggle his parents had to readjust themselves to the New World or his own battle for knowledge and success.

That success "obliged" him, as the French say; he definitely molded his political career to aid the underprivileged masses. Almost every senator who hopes for usefulness and distinction has to select a field in which to specialize; in the overwhelming multitude of problems and issues confronting the national legislators, he can hope to master only a few. Robert Wagner chose his promptly. To such questions as unemployment and insurance against it, the needs of labor, and retirement and old-age pensions he gave his whole heart and most of his time. He is anathema to big business, which bitterly dislikes him for his advocacy of pensions for railroad men, for the prolabor attitude he took as head of the first National Labor Board, for his housing bill, above all for the Wagner labor law, guaranteeing as it does to labor the unqualified right to organize and to be represented by men of its own choosing, unhampered by its employers. If the pending trouble in the steel industry comes to a head, employers will lay a good deal of the responsibility at Wagner's door.

A Root would never have fashioned these Wagner bills nor advocated such heresies nor made himself *persona non grata* to those whom Woodrow Wilson loved to call the "masters of America." How many of them must have longed to tell Robert Wagner to go "back where he came from." Doubtless they have cited him as proof of the great evil that immigration has done to us. But while they are doing this, social workers, reformers of all stripes, labor leaders, and the politically and socially discontented speak and write of the Senator from New York as an unswerving apostle of social progress in the United States.

A STRANGE TAMMANY BRAVE

YET SENATOR Wagner has not prated about his demands for justice for the unemployed or thrown his beliefs in everybody's face. He is not a professional reformer. He is quiet, unassuming, modest, and without "side." He is no spellbinder, no orator, but he makes a statement clear-cut as would a judge handing

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down a decision from the bench. He does not pose as a statesman or pretend to be other than what he is. He is proud of his record as a Justice of the Supreme Court of New York, which happens to be the court of first instance, despite its name, and of his promotion to the next highest bench, the Appellate Division. It is quite likely that he would have been content to be a judge for the rest of his life, with the hope that he would wind up in that most honorable position of Justice of the Court of Appeals, the highest court in New York State. But the opportunity came to re-enter active legislative life, and he took it. He owed this change to Tammany Hall, precisely as he owed to that malodorous institution his start in politics — his election, when twenty-eight years old, to the Assembly of the New York Legislature and his promotion to the State Senate five years later. For nine years, from 1909 to 1918, he served in the latter body, becoming in 1914 acting Lieutenant Governor and also functioning for a time as floor leader. Here he won the respect of reformers and the press, much as had Alfred Smith.

He won praise for his service in 1911 as Chairman of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, created by the Legislature after the Triangle factory fire which took such an appalling toll in the lives of girl employees. As a result of this commission's work, there was placed on the statute books a code of labor laws which many feel is still the most enlightened in this country. Long before the New Deal, Robert Wagner introduced bills at Albany dealing with compensation laws, the wages of women and children in industry, and widows' pensions. Naturally he carried this social-mindedness over to the Bench when he left the Legislature. He was the first judge to uphold the home-rule amendment to the State constitution and was also the first to affirm the constitutionality of the wartime emergency rent laws — his decision being subsequently upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States. His friendliness to labor was manifested by his being the first jurist to grant an injunction restraining an employer from interfering with a labor union's activities. Even then he upheld the rights of employees to picket peacefully and that right to collective bargaining which in this summer of 1936 has become perhaps the foremost issue before the country.

So in Senator Wagner those who insist that there can be no evil so great that good may not come out of it find a happy illustration of their thesis. He has come out of a political society long ago described correctly as an "organized appetite for public plunder." He is still a member of it. On July 4 last he dutifully spoke at its celebration of the national holiday which was also Tammany's 160th birthday — the day that Franklin Roosevelt, throughout his young years its sworn enemy, suddenly discovered that after all Tammany Hall had always been "on the side of popular rights and against the exploitation of the many for the benefit of the favored few." (As though Tammany had not existed throughout its whole history to exploit the city's masses for the benefit of the pockets of its bosses.) Senator Wagner on that occasion also held that Tammany had always stood for liberty. Historians have ever admitted that "the Hall" won the masses by giving them financial aid, charity, bread, food baskets, free picnics, jobs wherever possible — that is, when it was not busy degrading or robbing or just misgoverning them. But unquestionably Senator Wagner represents the best side of Tammany. He personally has not exploited people but has striven steadily to improve their lot; hence he feels himself entirely at home in the New Deal. He stands foursquare with President Roosevelt in the latter's war for economic freedom. If at times he has found it hard, like so many others, to understand the President's methods, sooner or later the President has cooperated with him, at least in most of the legislation that bears the Senator's name. He will have a prominent place when the history of the first Roosevelt Administration comes to be written.

The Record in Emergency

Like and with Senator La Follette, he was able, soon after President Hoover took office, to see that the economic emergency was so grave as to call for drastic measures and that, if the federal government did not provide tremendous sums for relief, disaster was inevitable. It was Senator Wagner who introduced the first bill giving federal aid to the unemployed — the Garner-Wagner bill, appropriating $2,100,000,000, which Congress voted and President Hoover so fatuously vetoed. Under Roosevelt, the Senator early demanded

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Portrait by Karl S. Woerner

$2,000,000,000 for relief through public works, because, he declared, "we shall experience a winter of indescribable cruelty unless action like this is taken." It was taken, and the crushing relief burden on local communities lifted. Where Wagner and La Follette had been derided and denounced, especially by the business community, for asking Congress for such an unheard-of sum, Mr. Roosevelt was compelled to ask vastly more, and the end of this relief spending is not in sight. With this demand for huge relief sums, however, Mr. Wagner wisely coupled demands for greater efficiency and speed in the administration of relief. He has never concealed his belief that some of the measures passed just after President Roosevelt took office were very dangerous. "Some of the provisions [of the relief bill] I have mentioned," he said on July 4, 1932, "would be unthinkable in normal times," when he would be the first to oppose the idea that a governmental agency should grant federal loans to private persons and companies. But, he added, "conditions face us which can only be met by heroic and extraordinary methods. The justification of these proposals is the plight of the nation."

As that plight grew worse, Senator Wagner only worked the harder. He jointly sponsored in 1933 the amendment to the relief act of 1932, which increased by $500,000,000 the amount of federal funds

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available for unemployment relief. His bill creating a national employment service was enacted, and, above all else, it was he who introduced, on behalf of the Administration, and wholeheartedly advocated the National Industrial Recovery Act itself, with its regulation of maximum hours of work and minimum wages throughout the nation, to which was coupled a substantial public-works construction program. It is not his fault that we do not know exactly how many unemployed there are in this country, for from the beginning of his service in Washington he has fought for the collection of complete statistics by the Department of Labor. In 1934 he introduced the unemployment-insurance bill, which became the basis for the unemployment-insurance features of the social-security law, and he introduced a bill providing compensation for employees disabled in interstate traffic.

Speaking on August 3, 1935, he said of the New Deal's critics:

> If all the things were unconstitutional which they have said were unconstitutional, it would be clear that the immortal document was an insuperable barrier to providing food and clothing and shelter for millions of destitute people. Such a conclusion would be contrary to our history, alien to our law, and abhorrent to our sense of social justice. . . . The United States was founded upon the proposition that where there is a conflict between a specific provision of the Constitution and the welfare of the people it is the provision and not the people that must yield. The spirit of our law is the spirit of growth. The fundamental issues today are not different in kind from those during prior crises in our history. These issues may be clothed in constitutional terms; but that never prevents them from being human issues, because our Constitution is a human document. Are we to exalt the human factor in industry? Is the sweatshop to remain closed? Are children to be kept at school? Are fair practices and steady profits to be preserved in industry? Is reaction or progression to triumph?

One thing is plain, the Senator will never cease advocating federal control of child labor and hours of work for all toilers, until the Supreme Court or the people grants that power to control to Congress. When a man of Senator Wagner's standing and record takes the position that the Constitution must be molded to existing conditions, it is idle for anyone to assert that amending it is treason.

The Man and the Issues

When it comes to the all-important tariff question, Senator Wagner is one of the few public men who realize that "a nation which sells must also buy" and that "in the long run the nationals of one country who buy goods from another must repay in goods of a different kind." Unfortunately — from the writer's point of view — he does not follow this thought through. He admits that to discourage all trade with the rest of the world is "destructive rather than protective"; that it "destroys jobs at home by cutting off foreign markets"; that it "reduces standards of living," by "shielding even those businesses which are so inefficient or so greedy that they are a drain upon the consumer's purse." Still he strangely insists: "We shall continue to protect ourselves against the trade which is undesirable and at the same time we shall encourage the trade, both incoming and outgoing, which we want and need." Here is a gross inconsistency. What honest trade can be "undesirable"? Admit that there is such, and the door is ajar. Every protected manufacturer knows of trade that is highly undesirable — it is the import trade in articles he manufactures! One who is so keen against special privilege ought, it seems, to realize that protecting any well-established industry is creating a special privilege, putting the government in partnership with a protected business to the vital extent of fixing and guaranteeing its profits, while taxing the whole country for the benefit of a few, besides impairing the principle of competition. But, after all, few of the progressive senators or representatives realize this or the corruption in our public life which we owe to the protective system. Senator Costigan is a notable exception.

For public housing the Senator's zest is so keen that he sailed for Europe to pursue his studies further on the very day that the President opened the great Triborough Bridge in his beloved New York — an occasion not lightly to be missed. Good interborough communications, the Senator would say, are necessary of course, but of what real value are they if they do not give the average citizen access to a decent home at a rental within his means? In 1935 he introduced the original Wagner housing bill. In 1936 his most important measure has been his United States housing bill, designed to provide federally subsidized housing for families of low income. It was some time before the President could be induced to enthuse over

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this measure, but its final passage was a great triumph. Here, too, Senator Wagner has not been frightened by fears of undue government intervention in private business. He realizes that this problem is too great to be handled by private capital alone, precisely as has been recognized in England, but he has never sought to exclude private capital from the low-cost housing field. Like Mayor La Guardia of New York, he realizes that without government aid and instigation low-cost housing will never be achieved — that perhaps the government alone can operate in this field in the crowded, heavily taxed areas of our large cities. In this sphere Senator Wagner has already builded himself a monument.

But these things do not exhaust the Senator's ceaseless labors. Being without some of the less worthy ambitions that actuate men in Washington, he is able to devote himself to his work as few men can. As I reviewed his activities in preparing this article I have been astounded by their number and variety. He deserves special thanks for joining Senator Costigan in fathering the anti-lynching bill in the face of the most determined opposition of the southern leaders of the Party in the Senate and the House — men who insist that this bill is both unconstitutional and an interference with States' rights. Against their judgment and Senator Borah's, he pits his own belief in the legality of what he proposes, in order to free the United States from the shame of being the only highly civilized country which permits mob vengeance — a kind of mob vengeance which has as often destroyed the innocent as the guilty.

He spoke out against Probibition among the first, with the same zeal with which he fought against "yellow dog" contracts and for the child-labor amendment. No one in Congress has championed more ardently the safeguarding of travelers at sea, and so he introduced in the Senate, as far back as December 5, 1928, soon after the sinking of the *Vestris*, the first resolution calling for a study by Congress of the entire problem. A similar resolution after the burning of the *Morro Castle* had most important results. More recently he has spoken out strongly against American participation in the Olympic Games in Berlin, as a moral protest against the horror and unfairness of the Hitler regime. Born in Germany though he was, there is none whose roots go deeper into our democracy.

The Immigrant Boy Grown Up

So here we have Robert Wagner — repaying his debt to his foster country year in, year out, over and over again. Others may do it more brilliantly, more spectacularly and impress their personalities more vividly upon the public, but none more steadily. Other speakers may rouse their hearers to mutiny and rage; Wagner will seek to convince them by plain truths, plainly stated. Others may, by the magic of their personalities, kindle wild enthusiasm in the hearts of others, creating a devoted personal following. Wagner scores by the simple appeal to logic and reason as well as to the heart. Others may take stronger positions in local affairs and would not in his place endorse Tammany candidates for office (Wagner did not support La Guardia, who was his comrade in the fight for the anti-injunction act in Congress and in his desire to help the underdog is Wagner's twin brother). But where others support the New Deal because it is to their interest to do so or because party considerations demand it, Wagner supports it because it advocates measures he championed years ago. No more convinced New Dealer can be found anywhere, and here is the subversive and "dangerously radical" program he preaches at all times:

1. Enactment of a permanent federal law regulating minimum wages and maximum hours.

2. Ratification of the child-labor amendment to the Constitution.

3. Perfection of the social-security program just begun.

4. Large public-works enterprises until private business takes up the slack of unemployment.

5. Collective bargaining for labor, free and assured, and the freeing of all labor in the United States from oppression, from improper living conditions, and from all economic insecurity.

"We must tear down," asserts this immigrant boy of 1885 as he stands before his desk in the Senate in the highest position (excepting only the Cabinet) to which a foreign-born citizen may aspire, "we must tear down the house of misery in which dwell the unemployed."

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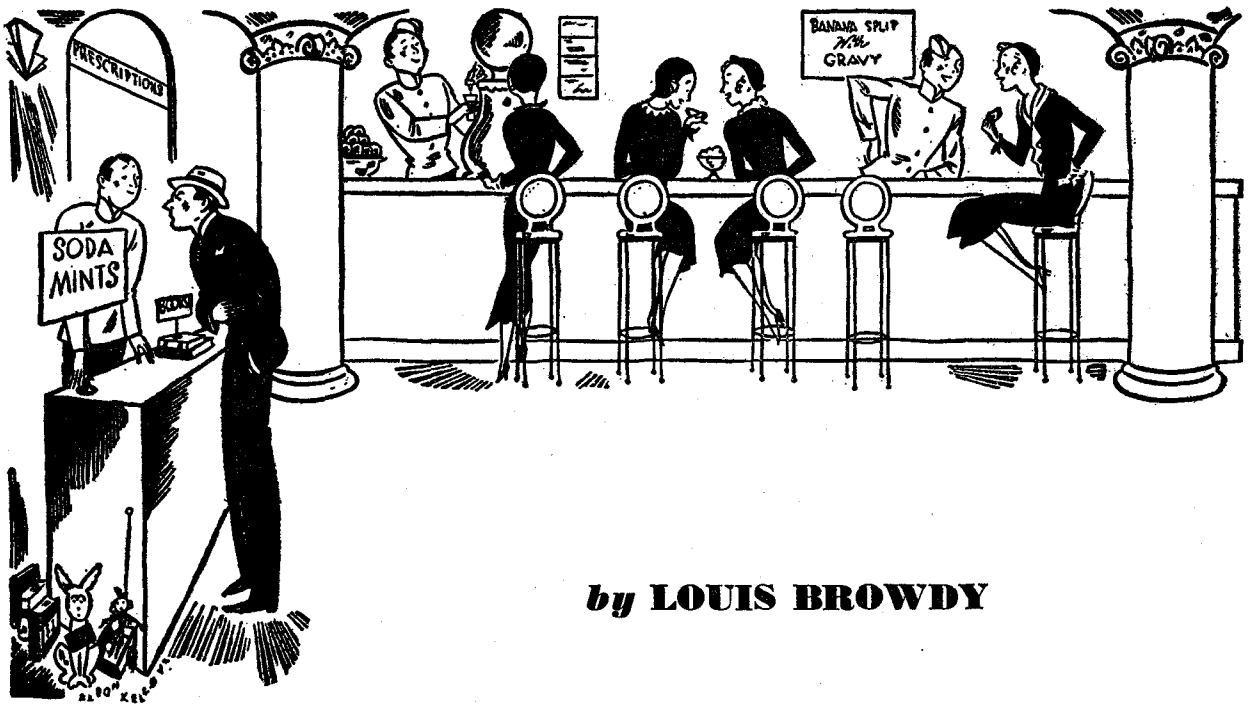
Lo, the Poor Druggist!



by **LOUIS BROWDY**

In a Kansas City drugstore a waggish customer, surveying the variegated stock of radios, cutlery, and electrical supplies, remarked to the pharmacist as he paid for his cut-rate bottle of Listerine, "I don't see any lawn mowers in the store. Is it possible you don't carry lawn mowers?"

"In the basement department," replied the pharmacist politely, indicating a broad descending stairway, "you will find a full line of lawn mowers, in all sizes, hand and electrical."

There are about 58,000 drugstores in the United States, employing some 115,000 registered pharmacists. What has happened to these drugstores and to the great body of trained pharmacists in recent years is an antic story, revealing as it does the gradual obliteration of the "ethical" pharmacy — as it is called in the trade — and the ancient tradition of the responsible apothecary. The pre-War generation can still remember when the pharmacist was a substantial and respected personage in the community, esoterically trained to render an important health service — as he still is in the greater part of Europe.

So it had been for untold centuries. The historian poring over the early records of colonial Virginia is amused by this discovery in the record of one of the first lawsuits to be filed in the first of the American colonies:

> There was petition made and preferred by Richard Townshend, Servant to Mr. Dr. Pott, against his Master, complaining that he has not been taught the art of an apothecarye, for the learning of which art and Misterye he was bound to the said Dr. Pott by an indenture bearing the date the 20th day of February, 1621.

Young Townshend was pertinaciously intent on making a future for himself in an honorable and lucrative profession — and he won his case. Only a few years before, the apothecaries of London had violently separated themselves from the dominant merchant company of the grocers, to which they had always been subject, certain apothecaries with professional pride refusing, in a legal action, to continue to "wear the livery of the grocers." Time has passed, and today the apothecary is learning to wear the livery of the hardware merchant and the restaurateur.

Horatio Alger in the Drug Business

Of the 58,000 drugstores of the country, about 4,000 belong to corporate chains; the rest are independently owned stores. But in the average American city the chain stores do from 40 to 50 per cent of the entire volume of the drug business. The independent druggist,

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competing desperately with the cut-rate chains and the department stores, struggles to keep his head above water, his survival depending largely on the mercy of his jobber or wholesaler, whose dominance of the trade is greater than in any other line of business. McKesson & Robbins, the great drug jobbers, are probably the largest wholesalers of any kind in the country. Their net sales in 1934 — the latest figures available as this is written — were $124,000,000, though their net profit per $1 of sales was scarcely more than 2½ cents. Marshall Field & Co., to make an apt comparison, did a total business in the same year of just $100,000,000 in their far-flung enterprises as wholesalers, retailers, importers, and manufacturers.

There are 3 great chains of drugstores in the country, those of United Drug, Inc., the Walgreen Company, and the Peoples Drug Stores, Inc. United Drug, the largest relic of the gigantic Drug, Inc., which was dissolved in 1933, owns the Liggett stores, which number 450 odd in the United States, and the Owl Drug Company, which operates 100 stores on the Coast. The net sales of United Drug in 1934 totaled $78,400,000, this figure including its sales to some 10,000 Rexall stores in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain — of which about 7,600 are in these States. The largest single chain in the country is that of the Walgreen Company, which operates 500 stores in the United States, "strategically located in 148 cities, in 31 States." Walgreen's net sales in the depression year of 1934 were over $53,600,000, with a net profit of $2,558,000 and a return on total invested capital of 17.6 per cent. The third largest of the drug chains is the Peoples Drug Stores, Inc., centering in Washington, D. C., and operating about 120 stores in Washington and the surrounding States, including 20 odd stores in Akron, Ohio. Latest figures show a return in one year of 19.1 per cent on the total invested capital of Peoples Drug. All these chains have manufacturing laboratories of their own, and they push their private brands with immense profit while stocking and advertising the popular wares of the trade.

Here, then, is the nub of the success story in the retail drug business. The cut-rate chain store makes large profits on private brands, sometimes paying its pharmacists and clerks substantial commissions on these PM's (which may be construed as an abbreviation for "profitable merchandise"), thus making up for the very moderate profits on nationally advertised goods. When the chain-store technique is shrewdly followed to its potential limits, with the inclusion of lines of "companionate" merchandise, the profits are fairly spectacular. The Katz Drug Company, which operates a chain of 10 stores in the Middle West, 7 of them in Kansas City, made a net profit in 1934 of $526,000. Their net sales for 1931, the last year they were reported, were $7,500,000, with a net profit of $475,000. . . . If you are in the carpet or drapery or shoe business or any other legitimate trade, prepare to be a bit startled by the figures of the drug business.

Doctor and Druggist

The druggist's predicament may be illustrated by this example. You go into a drugstore and ask for a large bottle of Listerine — the 75-cent size which the manufacturers brought down from $1 in the pressure of competition about 3 years ago. (Listerine was once and may still be the largest-selling single item in the drug industry.) The druggist, if he is a good businessman and if you look amenable to reason, brings out two bottles of yellowish fluid, one a little larger than the other. "Here," he says, "is a 14-ounce bottle of Listerine at 59 cents, and *here* is a 16-ounce bottle of McKesson's Antiseptic-59, which is virtually the same and which we highly recommend, at 49 cents." You, of course, know what you want and you don't care to have an ersatz palmed off on you; so you buy the Listerine at 59 cents. The druggist makes a profit of 9½ cents on the Listerine. But, if you had bought the larger bottle of Antiseptic-59, which is certainly not inferior to Listerine or palpably different, at the lesser price, the druggist would have made a profit of 26½ cents. And you would probably never have bought Listerine again. The bottle of Listerine costs the druggist 49½ cents, and the larger bottle of McKesson's Antiseptic costs him 22½ cents. The difference between one sale and the other is the difference between survival or submergence for the druggist.

There lies the crux of the independent druggist's dilemma, standing as he does be-

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tween the Scylla of the cut-rate chains and the Charybdis of the powerful manufacturers. His plight may be described, *ab ovo*, by the following parable.

You have been feeling ill or low or under par for some time and you finally go to the doctor, reluctantly availing yourself of that prodigious body of knowledge which is modern medical science. Your doctor, you assume, knows some of it. The doctor goes deftly and competently over the upper half or two thirds of your body, tapping, auscultating, questioning, testing reflexes, glancing at a urine analysis presented by his laboratory assistant. As you face him at last across his desk for his diagnosis and nunc dimittis, he knows at least that you show no serious symptons of the lethal diseases; he is satisfied that you do not have diabetes, nephritis, cancer, tuberculosis, syphilis, or heart trouble — at least, not yet. "You will live," he says facetiously, as he scribbles something on his prescription pad. "Take two of these capsules twice a day and come back in about a month." You expect him, perhaps, to write a considerable formula with strange Latinic abbreviations and a concluding signum, all impressively illegible. Instead he writes a rapid word or two on his pad and hands you a prescription which reads, "Vitamin ABD capsules — Parke, Davis."

You take the prescription to your neighborhood drugstore and you get a box of 25 capsules for $1.19, the standard price in your city. You think the capsules are pretty costly and you feel you have given the druggist a very good sale. The box of capsules actually cost him 85 cents. His mark-up on the sale is 28 per cent (calculating on the selling price); his operating expense, however, averages 33 per cent of his sales volume. (The mark-up on merchandise in an honest and well-ordered department store runs from 33 per cent to 55 per cent.) He will butter no parsnips with your purchase of Vitamin ABD capsules. If the doctor had given you an old-time prescription, you might have paid a little less for your medicine, but the druggist would have made, quite legitimately, 300 or 400 per cent on the sale, instead of 28 per cent, the larger profit accruing to his training, skill, and conscientious care in what you regard as a serious operation.

No small part of the plight of the druggist stems from the fact that the compounding of medicines has largely moved from the back room of the pharmacy to the big manufacturing laboratories. Even the placebo traditionally given by the doctor to humor a worried patient — and profitable to the druggist, even at 35 cents for a generous pillbox full — is now replaced by capsules manufactured by the great laboratories. A short time before your visit to the doctor, one of the Parke, Davis "detail" men had called on him and had expatiated upon the properties of these combination vitamin capsules, relating what notable results Dr. Peppercorn of Ypsilanti had had from them, not to mention the well-known Dr. Smithers of your own city. Parke, Davis and the other large pharmaceutical houses keep a large corps of these salesmen busy calling on the medical profession in every city.

As you finish your first box of Vitamin ABD capsules and prepare to buy another, you read in the paper that Parke, Davis & Company have declared an extra dividend of 50 cents per share of common stock, in addition to the regular quarterly dividend of 25 cents. In 1934 the net profits of Parke, Davis were nearly $9,000,000. After paying cash dividends of more than $8,200,000, a tidy sum was left to add to the company's surplus. In the same year the immense R. H. Macy chain of department stores showed a net profit of a scant $3,000,000 on sales of $118,000,000; and the largest manufacturers of carpets and rugs in the country, the Bigelow-Sanford Carpet Company, showed a profit of just $173,000 on sales of $14,500,000. These comparisons may illuminate the beauty of the pharmaceutical figures.

Patient and Druggist

Let us take a different instance. You have a bad cold and sore throat, and your budget scarcely allows you to go to the doctor for minor ailments. (You are, let us suppose, one of those eccentric persons whose fanatic conscience is troubled by an unpaid doctor's bill.) So you go to the drugstore for self-medication, your head filled with a "salt and sorry rheum" and trade names remembered from a thousand advertisements. You buy a small box of Bayer's Aspirin for 12 cents, for which the druggist has paid 9 cents (including discount). You also get a bottle of Phillips' Milk of Magnesia for 34 cents, for which the druggist has

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paid 30 cents. You get a jar of Vick's Vapo Rub for 29 cents, for which he has paid (with 10-per-cent discount) 21 cents. Finally, you buy a large bottle of Listerine for 59 cents. You pay the druggist $1.34 for goods that have cost him $1.10. His profit on the transaction is just 18 per cent.

Contrary to the common belief, drugstore profits for the greater part of their popular wares are not only very moderate but are scarcely enough to keep the store afloat as a responsible pharmaceutical station, an agency whose readiness in the hour of emergency is often a matter of life and death. Within the last few years the prescription business of the average drugstore, its most profitable and once its most important department, has been decimated. With the falling off of business, its stock of drugs is allowed to become incomplete, and the druggist has learned too often to be a bit cynical about precision in filling prescriptions. A curious pharmacist in Cleveland some time ago had 62 prescriptions filled by various druggists in the city and found upon careful check that only 5 had been compounded with strict accuracy.

The "ethical" or professional drugstores, except for a few in the eastern cities where a great body of physicians can support them, have fairly disappeared. The struggling independent druggist cannot afford to remain "ethical," and the corporate chains are intent only upon piling up profits by means of their private brands and by "companionate" merchandise of hardware, food, and other lines. The companionate marriages in the drug business are amazing things. A short time ago a law was passed in Colorado restricting the sale of meals and sandwiches to restaurants and hotels. There was, of course, a violent outcry from the drugstores of Denver, but the law was strictly enforced. The Jeancon Drug Company promptly sold out its stock of drugs and sundries and almost overnight bloomed forth anew as the Jeancon Restaurant.

Scanning the whole phantasmagoria of the drug business in America — the submerged independents, the impersonal cut-rate chains, and the "pine board" stores with their sensational "bargain" leaders — one comes now and again upon an exception. Such an exception are the Miller Drug Stores, a chain of some 2 dozen "ethical" stores extending from Detroit to New York. The Miller group illustrates the function of the drugstore as an adjunct to the physician and the hospital and the importance of the druggist in moments of emergency. In the summer of 1924, when word seeped through to Cleveland of the frightful tornado which had swept over the nearby city of Lorain and had cut it off from all communication, within an hour a Miller car was delivering to the doors of a Lorain hospital oxygen tanks, hypodermic tablets, and hospital supplies to the desperately waiting staff. When 5 years later, the thundering detonation on Euclid Avenue announced the horror of the Cleveland Clinic explosion, a Miller truck was first on the scene with oxygen, tetanus antitoxin, and hypodermic drugs. There is something here of the old-time druggist, who slept on his counter all night to be ready to send aid to the bedside of a child in the critical stages of diphtheria. In line with this history is the Company's attitude toward the patent-medicine racket and federal drug regulation. Says its president:

> We wanted the original Tugwell-Copeland bill and we shall eagerly welcome any similar measure that will make for a clean drug business.

The Giants of the Industry

What the druggist is really up against in his fight for existence is the patent-medicine racket in particular and the voracity of the drug manufacturers in general. The volume of trade in the drug business is stupendous, but the profits are thoroughly hogged at the top of the industry. Bayer's Aspirin, for example, which you buy at 12 cents a box of a dozen, is made by Sterling Products, Inc. Any pharmaceutical manufacturer will tell you after a moment's calculation that it costs about half a cent to make a dozen aspirin tablets (acetyl salicylic acid, National Formulary). The package may cost another cent. The druggist pays the manufacturer 9 cents. Sterling Products, who also make Castoria and Phillips' Milk of Magnesia, made a net profit in 1934 of $8,282,000 on sales of $26,043,000 (again, the latest figures available at this writing) — a clear profit of 32 cents per $1 of sales. In the same year the Bristol-Myers Company, makers of Sal Hepatica and Ipana toothpaste, made a net profit of almost $2,000,000 on net sales of $9,750,000, with a return of 33.5 per cent on total invested capital.

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The Lambert Company, makers of Listerine (which for 40 years was its entire product), made a net profit in 1934 of $2,200,000 on sales of $11,000,000, despite serious and growing competition from private brands that look, taste, and smell exactly like Listerine. On these figures the Lambert Company enjoyed a return of 34.3 per cent on its invested capital; in 1929, which was a really prosperous year, the return on the investment was 135 per cent. (Page Mr. Ripley!) In the peak year of 1930, the net profits were over $7,000,000. The average advertising expense in recent years has been more than one third of sales.

Vick Chemical, Inc., proprietors of Vick's Vapo Rub, made a net profit in 1934 of $2,400,000 on net sales of $8,800,000, a clear profit of 27 cents per $1 of sales. In a remarkable report to the Vick stockholders, H. S. Richardson, chairman of the board, eyeing the threat of regulatory legislation with a wary glance, earnestly averred:

> The use of proprietary medicines has steadily increased in the last few decades. The reason for this is precisely the same reason that causes probably 95 per cent of all the shoes purchased in the country to be made in factories rather than by individual village shoemakers. The manufacturer producing shoes in quantities can make better shoes for lower prices than can the village shoemaker who makes one pair at a time.

In the depression year of 1934, Vick Chemical enjoyed a return of 34.2 per cent on its total invested capital.

What the struggling druggist has to contend with, among other things, is the insatiable appetite of the American public for patent medicines, constantly whipped up as it is by the uncurbed American talent for advertising. Between 1900 and 1930 the population of the United States increased 62 per cent. The consumption of patent medicines, in the same period increased 245 per cent (U. S. Department of Commerce figures). In 1929 the patent-medicine manufacturers received for their products the sum of $319,000,000. In the same year, for comparison, the value of all the carpets and rugs produced in the country was only $177,000,000.

In Poor's *Industry and Investment Surveys* there are these sober sentences of advice to the careful investor:

> The outstanding characteristic of both the patent-medicine and cosmetic industries is the low cost of manufacture and the consequent high profit margins. In 1931 the total value of patent and proprietary medicines produced in the country was $254,514,000. The amount spent by the industry for wages was only $14,885,000, and for materials and fuel, $68,416,000, a total manufacturing cost of $83,301,000. There remained $171,213,000 or 67 per cent of the total value of product.

The investment manual goes on to say:

> The attractive profit margin enjoyed by the cosmetic and patent-medicine companies is also reflected in the operation of the large retail drug chains. The nature of the product handled and especially the integration reflected in combining manufacturing and distributing operations is accountable for this situation.

In 1929 the 3,256 chain stores in the country did an average business of $89,000 per store, while the 54,500 independent stores had an average sales volume of only $25,000.

The independent druggist who will survive and prosper will be the younger man who has been trained in the technique of the cut-rate chains and who will win the confidence of his customers in behalf of his substitute brands. He can buy a Listerine substitute (Liquor Antisepticus, N.F.) at his local pharmaceutical manufacturer's at 15 to 20 cents a pint bottle, neatly labeled and wrapped in Cellophane. He may even display a pyramid of large Listerine bottles in his window with the placard, *Cut to 55 cents*. But, when you come into his store for a bottle of Listerine, he will be able to sell you a bottle of his own Oraline at 39 cents — and be able to pay his rent and buy shoes for the baby.

That method may save the druggist's hide, but it will scarcely bring back the honorable tradition of the old-time apothecary.

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Miracle in Gary

The Negro Gropes Toward Economic Equality

by **BERTRAM B. FOWLER**

MIRACLES, when you find them, are usually in bright colors picked out on surfaces made drab by the extremities of human suffering and privation. On such a drab surface — the unrelieved gray of economic distress in steelmaking Gary — a group of negroes has worked a pattern of brave colors. The pattern is one of co-operative self-reliance, a self-reliance that was born when hard necessity was matched by an equivalent of courage and intelligence. It is, after all, of such combinations that miracles are always born.

Back of the co-operative miracle in Gary, the appearance of the pattern of negro ownership and control of the business upon which the group depends, lies the whole negro struggle for social and economic betterment. It was because of this struggle that there was a negro population in Gary. It was because of this struggle that the present co-operative development has sprung up, and with it the confident planning for a larger and more ambitious future.

The first 25 years of this century saw a new chapter being written into the history of the negro in America. Out of the deep south, with its fixed ideas, inhibitions, and prejudices on the race question, there came a mighty trek of black workers. The lure of the relatively high wages paid unskilled laborers in the industrial north was no stronger than the urge in these people to establish themselves in those sections remote from Jim Crow laws and racial discriminations.

The negro was still following the vision of something approaching equality and freedom. But there were too many facets to the problem, too many angles which escaped all but the most farsighted leaders of the race. Freedom for the negro existed only in the abstract. The negro had been given at least a shadow of it following the Civil War. On paper it was absolute and substantial. But actually it was ephemeral and partial.

The discriminations of employees and organized labor alike operated to make ineffective the freedom of the negro. Basically the problem was an economic one. Race prejudices, like most prejudices, go back to a fear of economic consequences. White labor tried to depress the wage of the negro worker, tried to limit his activities to the lower brackets of employment, that the skilled and more highly paid jobs might be theirs.

Social thinkers and economists have already pointed out the basic fallacy of such an idea. Economic history of the last few decades has proven beyond doubt the logic of such contentions. The shacks of the negroes at one end of the southern town were responsible for the presence of the shanties of the poor whites at the other. In depressing the negro, white labor put further limitations upon its own chances. But it took a depression to drive this fact home.

FROM SLAVERY INTO SLAVERY

GARY, INDIANA, serves to illustrate what happened to the negroes who trekked northward in the golden years. The conditions under which these people lived pretty well typify the lot of the northern negro. They came to this city to fill the demand for unskilled labor in the steel mills. In the boom years they made fair wages and attained a greater degree of prosperity than the bulk of the race had ever known.

But in all this time they progressed but little toward the goal of economic emancipation. The negro was still propertyless. And it has been very generally acknowledged that the absence of ownership is in itself a bar to responsible and enlightened citizenship. We have

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been learning this in the past few years as we study the breakdown in the rural areas where responsibility and moral and spiritual values have fallen in direct ratio to the growth of farm tenancy. It is even more clearly demonstrated in the case of the negro. The negro was freed from chattel slavery. But he never won his economic emancipation. And as long as he remained in economic servitude he could expect to rise but little in the social scale.

The United States census of 1930 tells the story with pertinent facts and figures. At that time the average negro-owned store did a yearly turnover of less than $8,000. The largest negro-owned store did a yearly business of $25,000. Chicago had a negro population of over 500,000. Yet there was not a negro-owned store doing a business of over $20,000.

The negro was essentially a consumer. In the fields of production he was still classified as an unskilled servant. In the consumer markets he was underprivileged and exploited. The average store in the negro section of a city was operated to exploit. The white proprietor sold at approximately the same prices charged by the stores in the better sections. They charged the negro first-rate prices but gave him consistently a third-rate quality of goods.

The plight of the Gary negro typified the plight of all negroes. If he was poverty stricken and in want he had to exist on whatever white charity chose to throw his way. When he became prosperous the white merchants exploited him to obtain a larger share of his prosperity.

This is a mere statement of cold economic fact. The problem was an economic one, to be solved by economic means. Social workers or politicians could do little to help. The negro must rise in the economic scale, must begin to build his own economic system, obtain ownership, if he is to begin to reflect the intelligent action and responsibility that goes with ownership.

Study the history of negro labor in Gary, Indiana, and you have a still clearer picture of what happened to the negro in the depression. In 1932 steelmaking Gary was in the doldrums. Out of a total population of 100,000, some 21,000 were being cared for by relief agencies. Thus, in the total population, white and black, of Gary, roughly 1 out of 5 was on relief. But, of the negro population of 20,000, one half was on relief. The depression had hit the negro first and with a sharper impact than was felt by the white.

Thus the story of the miracle that has been worked in Gary has far-reaching implications. It was a modest miracle, as many people view such things. But, considering the conditions existing among Gary negroes, what has been done through co-operative efforts is nothing short of miraculous.

Following the Gleam

There was in 1932 in Gary one man who saw something of the basic problem of his race. This man, J. L. Reddix, a negro schoolteacher, saw that his people must find a pattern to follow, a rule whereby they could work out their own economic salvation. Short of this, there was nothing constructive that could be done for them.

Mr. Reddix believed that the pattern was to be found in consumer co-operation. He found a few of his race who believed as he did. This handful of men and women met to study co-operative organization and technique. Gradually it dawned upon them that here was not merely a new method of doing business but a hope for the future of mankind. In consumer co-operation these people caught a glimpse of a philosophy and technique by which they could raise the whole standard of their race. For they saw that, as they worked out their own economic standards, cultural and social betterment would inevitably follow.

They had little to work with. They were desperately poor. Most of them had been mulcted so consistently by specious arguments and plausible schemes that they were reluctant to part with their hard-earned money. The total amount raised by collections at the first few meetings was $24.

Under the leadership of Mr. Reddix the Gary negroes began to turn their faces toward a co-operative future. They spent that $24 in publicity and in forming a buying club through which they could begin to pool their purchases.

The problems they faced were the same ones that have faced every group of co-operative pioneers since the Rochdale Weavers first wrote their famous principles, upon which the whole co-operative movement is founded. The odds against them were overwhelmingly great. With such puny capital there was little they could do. The majority of their own fellows

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saw only a band of impractical, if impassioned, idealists.

Perhaps they were idealists. But if they were they were also very practical idealists. They pushed forward with their co-operative purchasing. They made arrangements with a negro grocer to fill and deliver orders and give what discounts he could. Naturally the savings made by such methods were pitifully small. But the vision of Mr. Reddix and the courage of the few who followed him were boundless.

In December, 1932, the group took the plunge. In order to get a store rating and thus obtain wholesale prices, they rented a store equipped with fixtures, the residue of the failure of a former merchant who had occupied the premises. Most of their first customers came to jeer at the antics of a band of freaks.

Through the summer of 1933 the store struggled along, attracting few new members, having a turnover of only $200 a week. It was at this time that the courage and loyalty of most of the co-operators began to waver. The barricade they stormed loomed impregnably. From that dingy little store, their point of vantage, the goal of economic emancipation and real ownership seemed unbelievably far.

These people began to learn what other co-operatives had learned before them, that co-operation is a simple and workable rule of action, not a magic formula by which the world can be changed overnight. They had launched themselves on a career of economic reform. That reform could take place only as fast as they themselves absorbed its philosophy and mode of action.

No one saw this more clearly than Mr. Reddix, the leader who, though he might touch the hem of despair, never quite succumbed. It was through his leadership and persuasion that the Gary negroes at this point turned toward education as the sure and effective way of spreading and lifting their co-operative business. The negro was in the depths economically. He could come out of those depths only as he began to study a method of climbing.

In the fall of 1933 a course in co-operative economics was added to the night-school curriculum of the Roosevelt High School. Mr. Reddix, one of the regular teachers at the school, acted as instructor of the class.

With this move the negroes of Gary really launched their co-operative venture. The women members of the class, beginning to understand the true meaning of co-operation, formed a guild and began to organize buying power and co-operative sentiment. The class continued through the winter of 1934–35 with the largest attendance of any academic class at the evening schools, adding new and intelligent members to Gary's co-operative movement.

The Gary Society, now the Consumers' Co-operative Trading Company, boomed through 1935. The tiny buying club, started in an obscure corner with a puny capital of $24, did a business of $35,000 in 1935. With a membership of 400, it was rapidly becoming a focal point for the district. With its modern store on one of Gary's main streets, it patently stood for that which Mr. Reddix and his first few followers had glimpsed from the start — the beginning of a movement that by its success and strength should demonstrate that there is a method whereby the negro can win his economic emancipation, can begin to assume ownership of those things that have hitherto been beyond his reach.

Out of the store venture grew other things, significant and heartening things. A credit union was organized in which these exploited and underprivileged people could begin to pool their scanty savings, drive out the loan sharks that had always preyed upon them, and show financial stability along with their co-operatively owned store.

Education continued to be the foundation upon which they built. Some of the methods of education should cause many of the more favored communities to ponder. A youth league was formed, with clubrooms in which the younger generation could meet for education and recreation. In connection with this club a co-operatively run ice-cream and candy shop has been set up. This tiny store belongs to the children. They elect their own officers and manager, run the business on consumer lines. Here is education of intense practicality. Out of that little candy store will come future leaders of the Gary negroes' co-operative movement.

In Their Footsteps

Do not think for a moment that these people see no further than their initial store, with its limited service to the community. A flame has been kindled in this city. Having run

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an original capital of $24 into a business with an annual turnover of $35,000, the Gary negroes began to look further ahead on their road to economic emancipation.

This year a second store is opening. Beyond that are plans for 2 more stores by 1938, that the whole community may be served. At the same time plans are going ahead for the establishment of a bakery and milk-distribution plant to serve still further the members of the co-operative community. A gasoline station also is on the list. A wild dream? One might believe so if he could forget the original capital of $24 as he looks at the magnificent business that these negroes have built. For remember that this group has in 3 years, by its own co-operative efforts, outstripped all other types of negro-owned retail business in the United States.

And these Gary negroes are not alone. There are other such groups to prove that the success in Gary was no happy chance. In Pittsburgh there is an organization of negroes, also unskilled workers in the steel mills, who began exactly as the Gary negroes began and in three years have built up a similar society, with 2 stores in operation and plans under way for others.

In Kansas City there is another group of negroes who less than 2 years ago opened their own filling station and garage. So successful has this venture proved that this group is now laying plans for its own grocery store.

Through the whole pattern of the history of negroes in America runs the same hopeless story of servitude, first chattel slavery and later economic slavery. Against this background the negroes of Gary have worked their miracle.

In this new pattern they see their hope for the future. Individually they seemed helpless. The whole economic setup was designed to keep them propertyless and dependent upon the mercies of the whites who held the reins of power. Individually they were and are helpless. But, as these established groups have already learned, when they begin to organize co-operatively the whole picture changes. Through co-operative organization ownership becomes possible and substantial. Beyond that lies the hope of the race, a better economic status, an equality and freedom won first by economic action and then fixed by the social and cultural rise that necessarily follows.

The Gary negroes, in the working of their small miracle, have begun to understand how they can gain and retain that self-respect that comes with real, democratic ownership. Today some of the most intelligent and far-seeing of the leaders of their race are studying the Gary example. It *is* an example. It has long since passed the experimental stage. It has proved what the negro can do for himself. Which is the one thing that the negro population of America needs to learn today. This is the nature of the miracle in Gary.

Decoration by Stow Wengenroth

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The Road Turns Back

The Author in Search of Earthly Paradise

by **JOHN P. MARQUAND**

THERE SEEMS to be only a single occasion in my probably inaccurate experience when man is completely contented with his environment. This occurs when we entertain guests who are contemplating buying property in our neighborhood.

There is some subtle aspect in this situation which gives our immediate surroundings a beatific glow. It does not matter much who these guests are. They may be totally uncongenial, but suddenly we love them, because their interest reflects our own astuteness in solving the problem of life. We never realize until then what genial, intellectual, and sympathetic individuals our neighbors are. We recall gratefully the homely kindnesses of the tradespeople, the bracing and at the same time the mild qualities of the climate, the jolly social gatherings (of course if you do not wish to become too involved in the community, everyone understands — you can go in for that sort of thing just as much or just as little as you please). Miraculously, inexplicably the transportation facilities, the school, sewage, and tax systems are all perfect and efficient. That purely circumstantial place which we call home, through accident of birth or economics or through sheer gullibility, becomes just the right place to live in after all. Unfortunately, these occasions are rare and transient, and they pass like every other illusion. In reality there is hardly anyone who is actually completely contented with his environment, honest though he may be in saying that he enjoys it.

If this conclusion is too sweeping, it is certainly true with that essentially maladjusted group of beings known as writers. We are all of us looking for a perfect place in which to struggle with the uncertainties and the mental malaise of our unfortunate profession. We know probably in our inmost mind that it is a hopeless search, because we are subconsciously seeking for an environment that contains both peace and intellectual stimulation. We go on thinking that there must be somewhere in the world such a city, town, or village; but is there? At any rate we all have searched for it myself not excepted.

Now that I come to think of it, the areas covered by my pilgrimage are vast and rather surprising. My trail has passed through towns and cities along the east coast of North America from Wiscasset, Maine, to Charleston. I have seated myself in front of a typewriter in London, Berlin, Paris, Rome, Naples, and Florence, not to mention other areas of literary struggle, usually at small inns in outlying districts. I have lived for varying periods of time in Brittany and the South of France, in Sorrento and among the orange groves of Taormina. I have written in Bagdad while a desert sandstorm clogged the inkwell with orange-colored dust. I have attempted composition in a ruined city outside of Teheran, in Ispahan, and in the harem of the Emperor Xerxes in Persepolis. One evening I tried to write in Burma, but the lizards made too much noise. I have written in Cambodia while flying cockroaches, which the hotel management called crickets, dropped furtively upon the page. I have sat with pen in hand in the seclusion of Buddhist monasteries, in the interior of China, whose names I can neither pronounce nor spell, while orange-robed lamas and shaven-headed gray-clad novices breathed respectfully down my neck. I have written in the palace of Prince Teh in Mongolia, while pigtailed, silver-bedecked officials stared at me through the door, and in Chinese inns where travelers, guests, muleteers, and servants made peepholes by thrusting wet fingers noiselessly through the paper-paned windows.

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Memory's Return

As I hear the sounds of the New York elevated on Third Avenue, perpetually reminding me of a sedentary present, I cannot escape a more disturbing thought — suppose it were necessary to choose from my experience a place to stay permanently, from which it was forbidden to move. I can think of two which I might choose, two spots on the globe which are quite divergent and which are separated by many thousand miles. I can recall them at any time by certain recollections of sound and color.

The color of the first is black, with blots of emerald green against it; black lava fields that fall down in chaotic, impassable waves from the gradual curves of volcanic mountains ending in black cliffs that dip into a still, blue sea which is streaked with lavender where the sky meets it. There is a blackish tinge to the sands of the beaches. A gentle wind makes the fronds of coconut palms click together like the sleepy rattling of fans. The heavy droning of the trades is cut off by high headlands, so that only the soft breeze is left coming from the sea in the daytime, from the mountains in the night. It is always a cool breeze, that moves through perennially clear June sunlight, laden with the smell of flowers and burning coffee and sweet, exotic wood smoke. It is the coast of the land of dead kings. It is the Kona coast where King Kamahameda kept his war canoes, where the half-god Captain Cook was killed, where the chief Kuakini built his airy coral-stone house, and where the kings lie buried in the cliff caves beyond Kealakekua Bay. Even by motor from Hilo it takes a good day's ride to reach that place, and it is still a dreamy land of ghosts. A square white mission church is there, one of the oldest religious edifices on the island, but it stands among older ruins. The ants from the mainland have eaten up the kou trees, but the feathery algaroba introduced by the Catholic Fathers have taken their place. There are breadfruit trees and hibiscus. There are red-blossomed ohia forests in the uplands. It is a land of contrast and variety, but what one remembers best is its perfect peace. It is the peace of nature more than the peace of man.

The second place where I can think of stopping has been made by man. It is the City of Peiping. In spite of the turbulence that shakes it, it is essentially an orderly city and one of the few I have ever seen which does not resent a stranger, even a stranger of a different race. It has a classic beauty which is easily understood. There is a constantly changing panorama and a cosmopolitan society. Life is easier there and certainly more reasonable, financially speaking, than in any other city in the world.

Journey in a Circle

My thoughts have gone back often to Peiping and the Kona coast, but I know what would happen if I moved to either of them — restlessness would follow me with my bags and boxes. I know I should not stay long. I know furthermore that, if I did, my professional usefulness would be ended. When a mind is cursed with the creative urge there can never be the peace that mind is seeking until the creative urge is gone, and not one of us wants that.

It becomes plainer to me every year that there can be no promised land except the land within one's mind, and that is apt to be a shifting, unsatisfactory region. My own road has always turned toward home. My thoughts continually return to the place where my ancestors have come from and where I spent most of my childhood. It is a seaport town in Massachusetts with many disadvantages and many limitations. It has no great beauty nor great sources of stimulation but it has the great advantage of being a place where I belong, and probably this definite feeling of belonging is what makes it desirable. What is more, it is inescapable, the memory of an austere church spire and elm trees and of a cold sea and salt marshes has been with me during all my travels. In a way it has been the one reality, since it has been the only place where I have ever really lived and the only place from which I have ever tried earnestly and wholeheartedly to escape. I have tried to get its provincial accent from my speech and its conscientious narrowness from my mind. The difficulties I have had with that early environment, the youthful revolt I have experienced against it have in the end only made me respect its memories. For me, and I am willing to wager for everyone else, the road one takes, no matter how far it goes, always leads to a contradictory sort of frustration, because it always leads to accidental beginnings. It always turns toward home.

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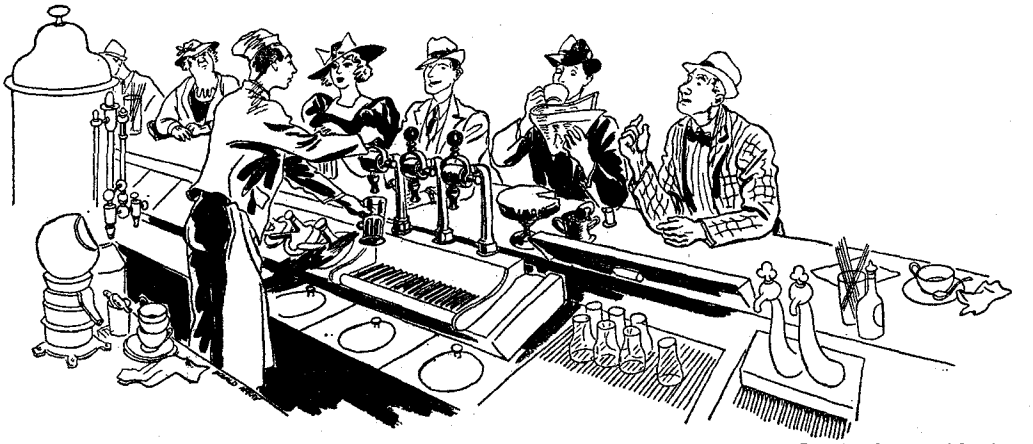
Two Hours to Philadelphia

A Short Story



Drawings by Donald McKay

***by* JOHN STEPHENSON**

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

And why shouldn't a fellow have a drink?

The Philadelphia bubble had burst; the thing to do was to forget it, to put it out of his mind, and that was all the more reason. Better to pull up short now than to grope on into a thing that sounded as if it came out of a fairy tale, kidding himself through it to an end that might be even worse, if it could be, than the middle. Lucky there were still Saturday nights to drink through, Sundays to come out of it in, and Philadelphia to be damned. Lucky to have a regular job he knew he could do, however paid it might be at that. Lucky? Not so lucky; soda jerker. . . .

Coke'n lemon, Jack.

The *Jack* was the payoff. He could tell with his eyes closed it was one of the Broadway smart guys, jingling coins in his snappy clothes on the other side of the counter. What was there to do but punch him out a coke'n lemon? A long time ago, when they called him Jack he'd look up and say, "The name is Ben." Then the smart guy would either stare at him until he'd blush or start to kid him about it, calling him Benjamin every time he came in, introducing him to other smart guys as Benjamin. . . .

Mickey, this is our Benjamin.

Hi, Benjamin, how's a brother Joseph and alla other brothers?

But he got over that. The best thing to do was never say anything, just take it. What was it, though, that made a fellow so sore at being called Jack?

Buddy and *Old Man* were almost as bad. Salesmen called him Buddy and college boys Old Man. . . .

Say, gimme a lemon soda, Buddy.

Choc'late float, Old Man.

Choc'late soda, Brother.

Brother was worst. That was the hale and hearty kind. House in the suburbs. Wife and kids. Grass in front of the house and a hedge around it. Maybe an old mother he was keeping, and feeling righteous about it, even though he quarreled with her. Why did being called Brother make him so mad?

The tough ones. . . .

I'll have a black and white, see?

As if they were sure he was going to slip chocolate ice cream into it instead of vanilla and they wanted to take steps to stop him from the very start. They probably didn't have anyone to order to do things; they were probably being bossed around all day themselves; so they had to take it out on a soda jerker.

The wise crackers. . . .

Is that apple pie over there?

Yes.

Well, I'll take the apple and you get the razzberry . . . *pppththzzz.*

It wasn't even funny, but he had to take it.

The fussy ones, women and men. . . .

I'll have a chicken sandwich, no dark meat, just a little salt and lettuce.

No dark meat is five cents extra, Miss.

What? Five cents extra? (And she with an all-fur coat.) Well, let's see. I'll have a chicken-salad sandwich.

Then she'd not say anything but sort of sniff at the sandwich all the time she was eating it, as if there was something the matter with it.

He treasured these insults like a collector. But it was a relief to have some high-class person come in and sit down, wait until it was his turn, and then say straight out without even one of their damn *pleases:* I'll have a cup of black coffee.

Different from all these and worse than any was a hot-looking woman coming in all dolled up for a date and kidding him, saying hot things and looking into his eyes out of her mascara as if she meant it, when he knew all the time she was just having fun with him till her date showed up.

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

It was just that he was on one side of the counter practically alone and all the people were on the other side together, each with his different attitude and different appearance. Each, too, carried about with him an air of having his own place and his own friends, of stopping at the soda bar just as a sort of intermission between having done something interesting and being about to do something important. They weren't down there under that lower level of the terminal to stay. They were passing by. But he belonged there.

II

It certainly was a relief to get home. To lie on the bed, blow smoke at the ceiling, and watch Pete — Pete the gallant shipping clerk — primp in front of the mirror for a date with one of the girls he'd shined up to at Macy's. Pete was always cheerful, friendly, full of wise cracks. And a ladies' man. He had to laugh. After Pete had got his tie and hat just as he wanted them, he'd make a sideway rush for the door like Lupino Lane used to do in the movies and say, "I go forth among 'em." Then

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the door would slam, and Ben would listen to his footsteps clicking down the four flights of uncarpeted stairs. He'd lie for a while blowing smoke at the ceiling, resting lusciously from a day on his feet, feeling how his heels ached, thinking lately, too, about the girl in Philadelphia.

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

He wondered sometimes that he didn't have any real desire to rush madly around on the kind of dates Pete had. It wasn't that he didn't get a thrill out of seeing a good-looking girl in the movies or the subway or the station, the same as any other fellow did, but somehow he didn't have much to say when there were girls around. And the idea of having one of those fresh, modern ones, with her paint and perfume and her clothes showing the lines of her body all over, the idea of having one of them to himself for an evening left him in a cold sweat, even though he was twenty-three and grown up. A lot of it probably was that he hadn't had much of a youth to get used to those things in, like other fellows had had, what with his father leaving, his mother dying so young, and him being put in that damned school. But part of it must be just that he was shy. He'd always felt that way.

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

III

He could remember back to prohibition, first starting to drink straight rye. It was an awful dose then. He didn't really close his eyes and hold his nose but he drank as if that were what he was doing. He could drink anything now without making a face. The fact was that along toward Thursday or Friday he got a sort of thirst in his throat, however bad the liquor might be, a strange desire for the cool burn at the Adam's apple, the warmth inside, and the feeling that followed on. But he always waited till Saturday because that was payday and he couldn't afford to drink between times. It kept him broke as it was.

The effect was the thing, though, the later effect. Getting drunk was natural enough, though after a while he didn't get hilarious any more. He just got jiggled, it didn't matter how much he drank, until he passed out. After that was the funny thing. He finally got so that he didn't even pass out; he just lost his memory or else remembered flashes of things and he couldn't tell for sure whether they happened or not. Out on your feet, they called it. Well, that was holding his liquor, and it was just odd for a while, but then it got annoying. He couldn't tell what he did and he wasn't even sure of the flashes he remembered.

He might have pulled himself up long ago if it hadn't been for coming to on that train from Philadelphia, roaring like a headache across the Jersey meadows. Imagine that. Waking up like a clock on a train from Philadelphia just in time for work on Monday morning, not remembering a thing after the tenth or eleventh drink on Saturday night. That was passing out on your feet for you, to go somewhere when you were drunk and stay for a whole day and a night, not knowing where you'd been except by the train you woke up on. The dirty, faded plush seat in the smoker. Every bone in your body aching. A head so big it was torture to raise it and stare out the window at the pale-green meadows, the gray factories. The hot sun glowing through the haze and the smoke. Fumes of alcohol rising over the marshes likes waves of heat on a summer day. Then the trembling and the jitters while you worked and drank bicarb and black coffee and died on your feet till you got home and to bed.

Sometimes he couldn't sleep, though, as if he were condemned to sleep no more until the next Saturday night when the drinks mounted to their teens again and he woke up Monday morning on the train from Philadelphia, racing dizzily across the Jersey meadows. A slogan he had read on a railroad poster kept pounding through his head then, like the throb of that thundering train. Two hours to Philadelphia, trains every hour on the hour. Two hours to Philadelphia, trains every hour on the hour. Two hours to Philadelphia —

Well, he'd given it a fair trial, no one could say he hadn't, trying to find out what he did in Philadelphia — and why Philadelphia. Being born there didn't mean much. He'd lit out of the place when he was still a kid, after Father had gone out west and Mother had died, as soon as he could escape from that damn school. Didn't remember a thing about Philadelphia or much about his father and mother either. When he tried to think back as far as he could, the only scene he remembered was his father taking him to a place that smelled strong and musty but was bright and jovial. His father used to keep him there a long time and once in a while give him something fiery or bitter to drink. The place was so different from his home and his mother that he used to think about her and wonder about her all the time he was there.

The only memory he could find about his mother now was that she was young and pretty, that he had liked her and she him — always, not just some of the time, as was the case with his father. He seemed somehow to recall his mother and him, the two of them together, after his father had left, just before she had died; but that was all, the two of them together. And even though he didn't remember her he always missed her a lot, particularly when he felt gloomy. He used to think a great deal about what she might have been like. One thing he did remember was a song she used to sing. . . .

Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?
Sweet Alice with ha-air so brown?

That was because his name was Ben and her name had been Alice. Nobody ever sang "Sweet Alice" now, of course, not even on the radio, but it had something to it that *Moon Over Miami* didn't have. He used to sing it to himself sometimes. . . .

Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?
Sweet Alice —

There was something odd. His mother's name had been Alice, his was Ben, there was "Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt," and now the girl's name was Alice. The girl must be about the same age as his mother, too, because his mother had been young when she died. And, even though he didn't remember his mother, he hoped the girl looked like her. He'd actually transferred the song from one to the other or shared it, rather, between them, because now he thought of the girl, when he sang it, as much as he thought of his mother. And it seemed to have a new meaning to him then, as if he were thinking about and trying to remember both of them. . . .

Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?
Sweet Alice with ha-air so brown?

IV

It had been months of drinking and going to Philadelphia before the first flashes of the girl had come. At that time he hadn't even known what she looked like, except that he remembered she was nice and they liked each other; but, as if each successive recollection had added new details, he had a clear picture of that first flash now — of the girl and himself in Philadelphia. It was rather like a picture of a picture or more as if he were on a stage in a theater where he could walk around and see every side of everything, even though it was outdoors, on a street. . . .

The two of them together in front of the lighted window of a big store; soft clouds of brightness shining out on them, surrounding them; nothing beyond but the darkness; no people passing by. The two of them together in a cloud of light. He had worn his old gabardine coat with the slash pockets in it and he had entwined her fingers in his and put both their hands in the pocket of his coat. The two of them together, their

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shoulders touching, in a blaze of glory.

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

Every time he got drunk and went to Philadelphia after that there would be some flash of the girl he could remember, during the week, some scene with the two of them together, in a street, in a restaurant, or maybe in a big movie house. As he got to know her better he could remember what she looked like, sweet expressions on her grave face, scraps of conversation, the way she called him Ben and he called her Sweet Alice. He treasured these scenes, these expressions, these scraps of conversation the way he collected insults at the soda counter. . . .

"Look Ben, a fandango."

"A fandango, Sweet Alice."

They had stopped to watch some street ragamuffins dancing at the curb for coins thrown at them by a hilarious crowd. They had laughed and laughed and strolled on laughing, hand in hand, almost dancing for joy themselves. Then darkness.

"First, Ben darling, you break the claw, like this." Snap!

She was across a snowy table from him in a restaurant, showing him how to eat lobsters. The lobster juice ran down his neck, down her sleeve, and they laughed. They were so happy the waiter was happy, too, and laughed with them. And that was all he could remember.

Sitting in the movies, stirred by some deathless passion on the screen.

"You'll always stay with me, Sweet Alice?"

"Always, Big Ben."

"You look like my mother, Sweet Alice."

"I'll mother you, Ben child."

And him not even knowing what his mother looked like.

That *always* was the only mention of time he could remember in all their meetings. He used to make up his mind with all his might to discover who she was when he saw her again, where she lived, so that he could find her for "always." But he never remembered; it was so natural, the two of them together. They seemed to know everything, then, with a strange sort of frightened knowledge. They were both, it came to him afterward, startled a little at various odd moments when they were the happiest. Then, later, he would comb back through the scenes to find some small clue, a street sign, a particular place, anything he could identify, but all the details were so vague, though the scene itself was so vivid, that he could never have found it again, particularly in a strange city.

Out of all this thinking, though, did come gradually and at last clearly a picture of Alice herself, a picture he could remember any time. She was as slim and graceful as a young girl, but you could tell by her thin, grave face that she was older. She had deep-brown hair, steady brown eyes, and the whitest teeth. She always wore a dark-green coat with a tweed suit underneath, a jaunty green hat, and a gray-brown feather. There was something sweet and

old-fashioned about her; she wasn't like modern girls. She had a way of touching him lightly on the arm or the back of his hand with the very tips of her fingers, to call his attention to what she saw, what she was saying, or something even that she was thinking.

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

Softly he hummed to himself:

Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?
Sweet Alice with ha-air so brown?

V

A FELLOW can go on with a thing like that only so long.

Well, putting it up to Pete might have been a good idea, and it might not. Lucky he hadn't put the whole thing up to Pete, the girl and everything, just the Philadelphia business.

Pete had looked at him sort of funny, thinking hard — for Pete.

"Listen, guy. Let me get it straight. You swill rye till you pass out on your feet, every Saturday night, and you wake up on a train from Philadelphia Monday morning with a godawful hangover. Is that right?"

Ben had nodded. "That's something like it."

"And you don't remember anything?"

"No, not much of anything."

"Nothing at all?"

"Well, a flash or a scene here or there. Nothing much."

"What kind of flashes or scenes?"

"Oh, nothing you could put down on paper and read."

"Well, how do you know where to go?"

"I don't know where to go; I mean I don't know where I do go, that is, I don't remember, except I hear people shouting, 'Philadelphia,' and I wake up on the train from Philadelphia."

"How do you buy your ticket?"

"I found out from the conductor I pay the fare on the train or he takes it from me or something. The conductor likes me."

Pete kept looking at him in that funny way. "And you want me to trail you and see where you go?"

"Yes, that's it."

"Well, listen, guy, instead of that, why don't you do like I said before and go out on a date with me? I'll get you one swell girl, and we'll tear things up, and you can drink all the rye you want, and the girls and I'll be right with you. Now isn't that a hell of a sight more sensible?"

"Guess it is, Pete. But I don't want to. I told you before I don't want to, just because I don't want to."

"But you want me to break a date and spend two days trailing you on a binge across three States?"

"All right, if you won't. I don't blame you. I shouldn't have asked you."

Pete kept looking at him in that funny fashion for a while. "All right, dammit. But just once. God knows, once is plenty."

"That's it. Just once."

"And listen, guy, you want to snap out of it and tear around and do things with yourself or you'll go nuts, get it?"

"Sure, Pete. Thanks."

What did a fellow like Pete know about a girl like Alice?

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

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Well, that seemed like a long time ago, but it must have been only last Saturday night, only last Saturday night that the drinks had mounted — nine, ten was the last he remembered — and he woke up Monday morning on the train rocketing across the Jersey meadows. Two hours to Philadelphia, trains every hour on the hour — the familiar beat of wheel and rail was in his ears, and he stared out the window at the fumes of alcohol rising from the marshes. Then in his nostrils there came a faint fragrance, and he forgot all about Pete to remember Alice. . . .

The two of them together in a park, walking arm in arm down a bridle path, with only the occasional flicker of a lamp through the leaves. And they came to an open green space, in the middle of which was a bigger lamp, with a flower bed all around it. And they strolled together across the green to the lamp and the flower bed, the fragrance of the blossoms heavy in their nostrils. And Alice picked a flower, explored the depths of her blouse for a pin; and she pinned the flower into the buttonhole in the lapel of his gabardine coat.

"A forget-me-not," she said, "to remember me by."

The odor of the flower lingered on as he stared out the window at the swamp. Then he felt a touch on his arm and he whirled around on the faded green-plush seat, half expecting to find Alice there beside him. It was Pete, worn, tousled, and disgusted. He didn't want to talk then, and apparently Pete didn't either, so all they said was — he said, "Oh; Pete," and Pete said sarcastically, "Oh, good morning, Ben, good morning." But he couldn't wait any longer when they got off the train; he stopped Pete in the big train room at Pennsylvania Station, stopped him right in the middle of the train room and held him by the arm.

"What happened, Pete?"

Pete was still sarcastic. "He stops me in the middle of Penn Station and he asks me what happened. Nothing happened, you bum."

"Something did happen, Pete. Where did I go?"

"You went to a dive in Callowhill and you drank more liquor in two days than I've drunk in all my life."

"But, Pete, didn't I go anywhere? Didn't I — meet anyone?"

"No, dear Ben, no one but a succession of the godawfullest drunken bums I ever saw."

"But, Pete, were you with me all the time? Didn't I leave the place? Didn't I go anywhere? Didn't I meet anyone?"

"Not a soul, Benjamin, not a soul. Except, when you passed out, they laid you away in the back room. When you woke up, they gave you more rye. When you passed out, they laid you away. When you woke up — listen and quit pulling the clothes off me. I even asked the guy about you. He said you were a nice guy but you must be nuts, and I said you were. He said you came in one time and looked around as if you knew the place and, after that, you barged in every Sunday morning and stayed for twenty-four hours and he never saw you again for a week. He said you talked about being there a long time ago, and I said you were nuts and I was your keeper. And I'm sick of it and I'm going to work, and you're going to work, too."

Not till he was on the subway did he think to look for the forget-me-not to remember her by. It wasn't there, not even a stem, no flower, no pin, not even a pinhole.

VI

WELL, the Philadelphia bubble had burst; the thing to do was to forget it, to put it out of his mind.

They have fitted a slab of granite so gray,
And Sweet Alice lies under the stone.

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

But to think a fellow could imagine all that and have it seem so real, to think a fellow could drink so much so long that he went somewhere and kept on drinking, and all the time his mind was working over a thing that never had happened. Lucky he'd put it up to Pete. Pete was so hard-boiled about his women and about other things too. He ought to be more hard boiled himself. Well, he'd go out on dates with Pete now, but what would any other girl be like, what would anything be like, compared to Alice? It was something to remember, but that was all; the memory of a thing that never happened.

He laughed at that and suddenly discovered there were tears in his eyes. He wiped them away with his fingers and looked quickly around.

"Rye," he said to the waiter.

Of course he could have lost the forget-me-not, flower, stem, pin, and all, in getting back to New York. But it would make a liar out of Pete. Not that there was anything so fantastic about that. Pete had lied to him about having women in the room. And take a fellow like Pete and the kind of women he traveled with and a fellow like himself and a girl like Alice. He oughtn't to mention them in the same breath. You'd think Pete would be ashamed. At least he'd be jealous.

Say, that could be it. That could be the answer to the whole thing. His head reeled as he surged into the idea. He propped his elbows as firmly as he could on the table, his cheekbones sunk in the hollows of his palms, and stared away through the alcohol and tobacco smoke, thinking it out. He must make no mistake. . . .

Pete and his women, himself and Alice, and Pete jealous! Pete had trumped up the whole story. It was just the sort of thing he was capable of, telling himself it was for Ben's own good. Pete had followed them all over the park, watching the two of them together, strolling down the bridle path. He could picture Pete leaning against a tree in the shadows, smoking cigarettes, watching Alice under the big light pinning the forget-me-not on the lapel of his gabardine coat. He could almost see the envy rising in Pete's eyes over him being made so much of by a girl like Alice.

Pete might even have his own designs on Alice, although, God knows, she wasn't his sort of woman. Of course, you couldn't expect Pete to know that. The idea made him furious. Pete was after every good-looking woman he saw.

Pete had gone too far, he'd overdone it. It hadn't sounded right, even at the time. Pete had been too surly that morning in the station for such a cheerful fellow, as if there'd been something he had been trying to hide under an attitude easy to maintain.

It was funny how you puzzled over something like that for a long time and then suddenly you put your finger on the key piece, and all the rest fell into line.

Well, it was his own fault. He'd known when he told Pete that he shouldn't have; he hadn't felt at all right about it; he'd felt uneasy and edgy even while he was doing it. After this he'd obey his own instincts and not tell everyone all about his business. And he'd find out by himself, find out —

Why, that made it so there was a Sweet Alice!

He raised his head, dropped his hands on the table, sat back in his chair, and closed his eyes, hardly daring to move. He'd known it was too real not to be true; he'd known it even while he had been arguing with himself. Even as he was deciding it was all imagination, there had been a voice, perhaps the voice of Alice herself crying: "It's true, Ben, it's true. Don't believe it isn't true, Ben."

And her voice was calling him now. He rose, held on to the table for a while, then stumbled away. And in his ears he could hear the old beat of wheel on rail. . . .

Two hours to Philadelphia, trains every hour, on the hour. Two hours to Philadelphia, trains every hour on the hour. Two hours to Philadelphia —

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A Page for Poets

Conducted by Henry Goddard Leach

President, Poetry Society of America

More Poetry Books

Recently a young poet came to my office with the sad news that the publishing of poetry books in America was at a standstill. I pinched myself to be sure that it was not a dream; for I had just finished reading forty new volumes of verse, to find twenty fresh ones stacked upon my desk at home. Surely American publishers put pleasure above profit. To the poets they are generous and very brave. The rhythmic word is getting more and more into type. Someone estimated that last year forty thousand makers of verse succeeded in seeing their work in print, including country newspapers and pamphlets.

In a Letter from Pontus (Macmillan, $2.00) John Masefield leads the field of the open lyricists. In these new poems he is, as always, the vital, contemporary poet of everyman. In Poems: 1919–1934 (Holt, $2.50) Walter de la Mare offers a prolific collection of pleasant fireside themes. Fat woman, slum child, cat, and echo are presented with equal whimsicality and gentleness. The Selected Poems of Wilbert Snow (Mitchell, $2.50) reveal with quiet humor, in terse and salty phrase, the unspoiled folk and nature of the rocky Maine coast. Lionel Wiggam in Landscape with Figures (Viking, $1.75) at the age of twenty reprints his verse from many magazines. His quatrains move with a natural beauty born of the calm and happy observation of an itinerant but serious youth. Welcome, newcomer!

In the wake of the major lyricists come volumes less pretentious and more personal. The Poems of Blanche Sage Haseltine (Midwest Poetry, $1.00) are pervaded with the poignancy of a heart crying out for some inner need but with a mind that soothes the heart in accepting what is given. Facing West, by Pearle R. Casey (Caxton, $2.00), still braves the timber line without taint of sophistication. Inga's Vision, by Albert Regent (published by the author, $1.50) is personal logic in poetic garb. There Have Been Dreams, by Mary Elizabeth Smith (Humphries, $1.50), is a volume of vignetted emotions — a page for each.

The successors of the neosymbolists present two books. In Tract of Time, by Helen Cornelius (Oxford, $2.00), reveals the realm of the abstract personified and created into a living and active world of its own. Emily Dickinson has by now received this writer into her particular heaven. In Black Suns (published by the author, $0.50) Benjamin DeCasseres publishes the third volume of his vivid personal incarnations.

The outstanding volume, however, of this summer's vintage comes from the urban group. It is Burning City, by Stephen Vincent Benét (Farrar & Rinehart, $2.00). Here is complete awareness of theme and vivid mastery of rhythm. With scorching irony but unembittered gentleness this very real poet broods over Manhattan, the World War, the dictatorships, the Austrian socialists, the sorrows of Walt Whitman's ghost, the decay of American morale, city nightmares, the rearmed world of 1936, and the impossible realities of our vaulting but collapsible civilization. In Hall Bedroom (Drey, $1.50) Herbert Bruncken does not soar over the city. He lives with it and under it. He gives poetic integrity to the choked and devitalized souls whose lives are the humdrum of four walls. Bowery Parade, by Stella Wynne Herron (Delphic, $1.50), is not gentle but satirical and devastating. Norman Macleod in Thanksgiving before November (Parnassus, $2.00) is angry and angular. This poet follows the machines out of the cities into the polluted open spaces and around the globe. "*Without kindness* airplanes circle the universe."

And anthologies to suit every taste! This month two come from Macmillan in revised editions. Chief Modern Poets of England and America (Sanders & Nelson, $3.00), in contrast to the anthologies of Monroe or of Untermeyer, gives copious selection from a few poets of our century rather than few from many. An Introduction to Poetry (Hubbell & Beaty, Macmillan, $3.75) is a veritable Baedeker of poetry. It is necessarily weak in the contemporary period.

Two books of narrative verse we have also. The Trevals, by Sarah Larkin (Renouf, $2.00), takes us deep into the Laurentian woods of Quebec and the effervescent and fatalistic spirit of the Canucks. Sir Galahad and Other Rimes, by Christopher Ward (Simon & Schuster, $2.00), are merry ditties about the heroes and heroines of classic lore.

And finally we pay homage to the really important book of the late spring crop, Old Norse Poems, by Lee M. Hollander (Columbia, $2.25). Dr. Hollander has performed well the difficult task of assembling and rendering into English the best of the non-skaldic verse omitted in the Poetic Edda. Like the Eddic lays of the elder Nordic gods, these poems of heroes of the north are pre-Christian and pagan. The themes are, as the Aryans say, *Ur-Alt*. They reveal a grim psychology and a sturdy heroism untouched by all that is familiar to us today, motivated as we are by the glory of Greece, the grandeur of Rome, the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount.

The Ancient Mariner

A group of enterprising Swedish businessmen recently returned to Stockholm, via New York, from circling the globe in the Southern Hemisphere. For days in the southern seas the only companion of their ship was an albatross. Hours at a time they sat on the deck contemplating the beauty and undulating flight of this bird. One day they offered a prize for the best verse about their mysterious mascot. Passengers submitted tributes in several languages. The prize went to the wife of the Chairman of the Swedish General Electric Company. Mrs. Edström is a talented and fervent patroness of several arts; she was born an American. Forum preempts the privilege of publishing this variant of *The Ancient Mariner:*

The Albatross

An Albatross! An Albatross!
Down in the sphere of the Southern Cross!
Beauty new, on the blue!
Watch its flight, so light
Such might — keen delight!
See the swerve of the curve
As it flies! Rapture true!
Feel the joy of the Bird — unheard!

Now it swirls, now it hurls
So near the wave.
Now it dips, now it dives
Through the air. Motion rare!
Rhythm fine, like a rhyme.
Mighty Bird!
Not only bird thou art to me;
A glow of soul seems thine.
A gleam sublime from the Divine!
Oh Albatross! Our Albatross!

Ruth Randall Edström

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OUR ROSTRUM

These columns are open to brief letters commenting upon any article or subject that has appeared in The Forum. Because of space limitations, the Editor must reserve the right to publish letters only in part.

BACKWOODSMAN OUTSMARTS (TEMPORARILY) CITY SLICKERS

For the further information of those readers who read about Pledge Brown in the July 20 (et seq.) issue of Time *and for the amusement of those who did not, let it be recorded how* THE FORUM *came to be among those naïve publishing concerns which allowed themselves to be finessed out of various sums of money by as smooth a "literary" fraud as has hit the main stem in many a day.*

Wilbur P. (Pledge) Brown was a wild and woolly frontiersman from the north woods of Alaska, and he stalked into the FORUM *office one day in June, fresh (he said) from the New Deal colony in Matanuska Valley with a red-hot story. "By September," proclaimed Backwoodsman Brown, "I predict that the colonists will be begging to be taken back to the U. S. A. I have spent three months with them, and they are sissies! They can't take it." Brown pounded a fist on the editorial desk to emphasize his righteous anger. "Besides," he said fiercely, "they've been sent to Alaska to farm, and no farming can be done there!"*

Somewhat overawed, we inquired if the soil was bad.

"Hell, no," yelled Brown. "It's too good! The crops grow so fast they rot in the ground!"

We could think of no suitable reply to this.

"Gimme a typewriter and let me write my story," begged Wilbur P. We submitted, and he sat down and began rattling off sheets of manuscript. Some hours later he announced that the masterpiece was completed, and, slightly dazed, we read it over. Granting certain premises, it was a mighty fine yarn.

Brownie (he asked us to call him Brownie) said he worked for the Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle *and was just concluding his first trip to the States in seven years. (He looked it.) He had to leave for the Coast in a day or so, and wouldn't we please buy his story quick, because he needed the money to get back? He was well known, he said. (We got some fascinating information along this line much, much later.) Everybody in Alaska knew him. Besides, he had corresponded for dozens of newspapers all over the country.*

This last sounded reasonable, and an inquiry to a Philadelphia daily he mentioned brought a reply which stated: He appears to be reliable and well informed on Alaskan affairs. *So we gave him a check, a note of acceptance, and our blessing, and he gave us his ms. and a promise to send everybody a bearskin rug when he got home.*

About a week later a friend of ours in another magazine office gave us a distinct turn by calling up and inquiring what we knew about Pledge Brown, who was trying to sell him a story on Alaska and had exhibited our little letter. Since Brownie should have been practically in Ketchikan by that time, we suddenly discovered that the entire episode had PHONEY *printed across it in our best Ultra Bodoni display type, only the letters had been so big we hadn't been able to see them. Two minutes on the telephone revealed the unmistakable fact that our ms. was identical with the one Brownie was peddling down the street. Another two hours revealed it to be identical with two more already purchased by two other magazines and with one already published in the Sunday edition of a New York newspaper. Our friend (who hadn't given Brownie any money) declined to be embroiled and politely rejected the story, whereupon our backwoods pal vanished rapidly and apparently for good.*

It would have been for good, too, if Brownie hadn't rather fancied himself as a ladies' man. We needn't go into this, except to say that one evening he met a young lady accompanied by a detective.

Meanwhile our frantic inquiry to the Alaska paper Brownie said he worked for had brought an interesting reply: . . . Brown never saw Matanuska. He never worked for The Chronicle. He spent two or three weeks in Ketchikan, most of which time he was in jail. He has a record of petty thefts. He owes bills. . . . He has borrowed money over the signature of The Chronicle. He has been investigated by the police. . . .

Red-faced, we also learned that Delegate Dimond of Alaska had filled pages in the Congressional Record *with fulminations against Brown's Matanuska stories, which Mr. Dimond swears were full of, to put it mildly, misstatements.*

Brownie nearly talked his way out of court, but a copy of the letter from the Chronicle *in the hands of the prosecutor made him very ill at ease; and, after a study of his police record in various cities, the judges gave him three years.*

A recent letter from the Chronicle *informs us there is suspicion Brownie has too many wives. There is also a report he is an alien, subject to deportation when he gets out of jail. We hope so.*

P. S. — We never got our bearskin rugs.

LOW PRICES AND PROSPERITY

To the Editor:

Mr. [J. George] Frederick's article ["Low-Price Technics Can Remake America," August FORUM] is concerned with fundamental elements of business policy. The kernel of his analysis is found in the statement that "in true low-price technics

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THE famous "Garden Route" of South Africa includes Mossel Bay, a quaint Indian Ocean resort — glorious Montagu Pass — the "Wilderness" (an unusual name for a region of transcendent beauty) picturesque Knysna, and George, called the "prettiest village on the face of the earth."

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the price is absolutely the central hub of policy making," shaping all activity and ruling all operations. Instead of taking existing costs of production for granted and hoping that enough goods may be sold at prices above these costs to afford a reasonable profit Mr. Frederick clearly sees that the fundamental requirement is a reduction of costs to the end that a level of prices may be established which will permit an enlarged volume of purchases — the enlarged volume in its turn helping to make the low prices possible. He sees also that if such cost reductions are to be significant they must be accomplished without a reduction in wage rates.

This conception of prices is in sharp contrast to that which is embodied in the phrase charging "what the traffic will bear." Instead of trying to get the highest price the existing traffic will bear, the conception here is, through price policy, to enlarge the volume of traffic. Instead of a static conception of price adjustment through demand and supply in the market place, there is here a dynamic conception of reducing costs and prices as a means of expanding the market. This is the real road to progress.

H. G. Moulton
President
The Brookings Institution
Washington, D. C.

Our Rostrum

To the Editor:

. . . . . .

I have looked this article over, in a general way, and found it very interesting and constructive and, of course, entirely sound, from an economic standpoint.

There is no doubt but what we should move in the direction of lower prices, and it must be recognized that in moving in that direction we must, of course, improve our efficiency by lowering our costs, because we cannot reduce prices without first reducing costs — the margin does not usually provide for doing otherwise.

I do not think anyone can make any more contribution to saner thinking than preaching the gospel that progress lies not only in making present things cheaper but new things better, especially when the political philosophy of the day seems to be in the direction of discounting the importance of lower costs, lower prices, and hence promoting the theory of scarcity.

Alfred P. Sloan, Jr.
President
General Motors Corporation
New York, N. Y.

To the Editor:

. . . . . .

Frederick's article . . . is not only highly interesting — it is certainly a significant interpretation of the current trend in industrial production and distribution. I am going to ask several of our top executives to read it, as a keen analysis of the price philosophy which many believe American industry must generally adopt.

Frederick might well have turned to the oil industry for another illustration of low-price technics. Low prices for gasoline have been enforced in the industry perhaps more by overexpansion than by deliberate perception of the economic advantages. Nevertheless, it is true that low prices for motor fuel and lubricants have not only placed these products within the reach of almost the entire population but have also aided very materially in making it possible for the average family to own and operate an automobile. The market for these products is, of course, tremendously expanded in the era of low prices, as compared with the market of fifteen to twenty years ago, when prices were very much higher.

Conger Reynolds
Director, Public Relations
Standard Oil Company
Chicago, Ill.

To the Editor:

. . . . . .

I should agree that purchasing power and the national income can be increased only through a lowering of prices as a result of the lowering of costs and the full

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Our Rostrum

utilization of our economic resources. The low-price technics, which are so well described in Mr. Frederick's article, could more appropriately be called low-cost technics.

It seems to me, however, that Mr. Frederick has underemphasized the importance of competition as an element in stimulating these low-cost technics. He describes lucidly the decision to put a product on the market at a given price, without indicating that it was because of competition that the whole operation was undertaken. For instance, Mr. Ford introduced his Model A line only under stress of heavy competitive pressures.

It is my feeling also that manufacturers and processors have gone far ahead of agricultural producers in the adoption of low-cost technics and that herein lies one of the causes of maladjustment which have harassed our economic system.

G. E. PUTNAM
Economist to Swift & Co.
Chicago, Ill.

To the Editor:

. . . . . .

This is no theory with us. We are now distributing Marlin Blades on the basis of fifty for fifty cents after trying out the market at a larger price with greater profit per hundred. Then we decided if we lowered the price but still reserved a reasonable profit that we could go to town, so to speak.

For years, executives and millions of others have talked about the many shaves they could get from one blade, and our theory was if we came out with a penny blade of a high quality that we would increase, in an enormous way, the use of blades. Since then we have partly demonstrated this, as our sales since last November have run into millions and we have not touched the surface yet.

Therefore, this is a practical application of the volume being increased by the lowering of prices. We have the same theory about our guns and we insist upon their being sold by retailers and jobbers at the lowest possible prices. We have an interesting problem before us of effecting a saving so our prices will still be lowered in order to increase the sale of guns.

This is our current position, and I thought perhaps you would like to know about it.

FRANK KENNA
President
The Marlin Firearms Co.
New Haven, Conn.

"MODERN MOTHER" REBUKED

To the Editor:

Modern Mother's attitude ["Sex Ethics: Old or New?" August FORUM] on the question of sex decency reminds one of the colored gentleman who didn't believe in hell because no constitution could stand it.

If early Puritanism had a strong point, it was that it schooled constitutions to "stand it," even including, if need be, hell-fire and the gnawings of sex. Without attempting to hold a brief for asceticism in present-day life, I think that many people still feel that something very definite is to be gained by the sort of self-discipline practiced by these sturdy forebears, and they suspect that most of our pulpy moderns would crumple under the rigors of a life which the colonial ancestors were able to survive — to the social delectation of these same modern mothers who rather basely leave them in the lurch in the matter of morals.

I fear Modern Mother strains our credulity somewhat by her rather puzzling picture of the girl of today. First she presents her as an untrammeled young thing quite unembarrassed by inhibitions in her relations with the other sex — taught and encouraged to express herself frankly and instinctively as in any other ordinary social relation. And then we behold her arrived at the sex-conscious age, after having indulged in a few "premature encounters," exhibiting colossal restraint and settling herself coolly to "wait for something which promises permanency for future indulgence."

I am acquainted with the charming vistas of Westchester County and aware that its sparkling atmosphere conduces to the evolution of a logic which in less favored communities, such as my own, might be considered contradictory. Making due allowance, therefore, for the slightly incredible behavior of the girls and boys of Modern Mother's acquaintance, I still assert my conviction that average adolescents do not operate that way. Honestly, as between parents, Modern Mother doesn't believe they do, either. If she were to frequent committee-room divans less and park benches more and peer oftener into parked automobiles than into Y. W. board reports, she might easily convince herself that canaries do not breed mockingbirds and that home training in self-indulgence produces self-indulgent individuals.

I also had some dozen years of college experience, as student and teacher, and I am familiar with the grounds upon which the colleges have been indicted for various perversions of educational idealism. But if they are turning out with any regularity young men who by preference choose their brides among girls who have had "some experience" I suspect that there is still a goodly number of us left who may feel like taking a hitch in the old belt and cutting that college education for our offspring out of the budget. Perhaps they may

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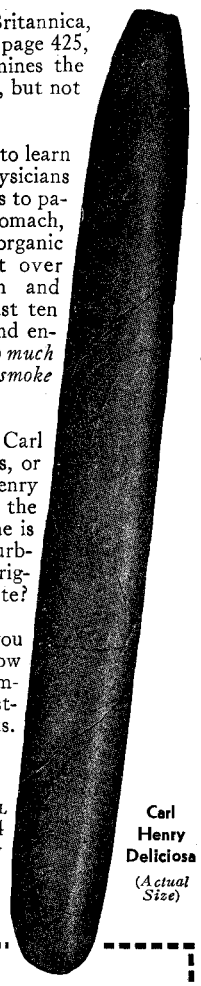

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retaliate at the age of eighteen by setting up — without social obloquy and in peace and dignity — love nests with their temporary mates, without benefit of clergy. At any rate we shall have had the satisfaction of declining our direct contributions to this brand of precept.

Yes, freedom of youth is here; we may freely admit that much. But only in the sense that freedom for all is here — that freedom which should follow upon intellectual emancipation and the high state of living and thinking belonging to an age of good literature, good music, good sanitation, and good morals. To interpret freedom of youth as a state of society in which young people own the earth and view with more or less flippancy the conservatism of their elders and flout conventions which were older than the pyramids before their puny protoplasm stirred within its inconsequential cell is to voice an accusation which none would so quickly resent as the good and decent among the young people themselves.

Modern Mother will recall what Omar Khayyam said about "taking this sorry scheme of things entire and remaking it to the heart's desire." I permit myself to doubt whether her young people have the judgment or her committee the wisdom to bring to pass the complaisant reforms in social attitude she so charmingly describes.

HOMER A. HARVEY, M.D.
Batavia, N. Y.

LABORSAVING MACHINERY

To the Editor:

I am very much interested in the editorial of your August FORUM ["Humanizing Machines — I"] regarding the cotton picker invented by the Rust brothers of Memphis, the reason you state they gave for withholding the cotton picker from the market. . . .

. . . There are two types of sharecropper; one furnishes himself, feeds himself, has his own teams, tools, and seed, and gives the landowner one fourth of his cotton and one third of all other crops as rent, performs all labor, including gathering of the crops. The other type of sharecropper, commonly called a half-hand, furnishes nothing; the landowner furnishes everything but charges the half-hand for his food. The half-hand performs all the labor, including the gathering of the crop.

Whenever there is a good crop it is decidedly to the interest of the sharecropper, as well as the landowner, that the crop be gathered quickly. . . . Cotton picked early . . . will bring $10 to $15 per bale more than if it is picked later. . . . It is, therefore, customary to hire extra help to do the picking. . . . The money paid this extra help . . . is paid entirely by the sharecropper. . . . Therefore, if the cotton picker does save money, it saves every dollar of it for the sharecropper and makes no difference whatever to the landowner. . . .

. . . . . .

F. F. MILLSAPS
President
Ouachita National Bank
Monroe, La.

To the Editor:

. . . . . .

The advent of great inventions or improvements in technological processes has invariably brought the familiar fear of unemployment and the subsequent evidence of a stimulation in employment.

If we go back to the threshing machine or the sewing machine or if we leaf back a page in our own generation and recall the needless worries over the advent of the motorcar, it is plain that a new machine, if it benefits humanity, if it lightens the labors of men and brings new opportunities for the individual, and if it is in the hands of businessmen with a social conscience and broad vision, is almost certain to increase employment and the national wealth and help people to enjoy greater materialistic pleasures.

. . . . . .

Indeed, I am convinced that the soundest hope of an enduring prosperity in this country lies in the furthering of technical processes on an intelligent, courageous, and well-managed basis, guided by enlightened private enterprise.

C. W. CHESTER
Chairman of the Board
General Foods Corporation
New York, N. Y.

PROGRESS IN PSYCHISM

To the Editor:

Mr. Heard's plea ["The New Epoch in Psychical Research," by Gerald Heard; July FORUM] for open-mindedness in psychical research will meet acceptance by physicians, who are glad to support the newer view that mind and body are different sides of a personality. In a medical world where patients show a wonderful ability to see what they want to see and hear what they want to hear, Mr. Heard is not convincing when he speaks of "soothing the sensitive" and of increasing the medium's powers, unless he means finally to submit psychical research to those "highly critical attentions" and "exacting tests" which they cannot now endure. But physicians can agree that they do not want investigators who know that certain things cannot happen.

EARL D. BOND, M.D.
Institute of the Pennsylvania Hospital
Philadelphia, Pa.

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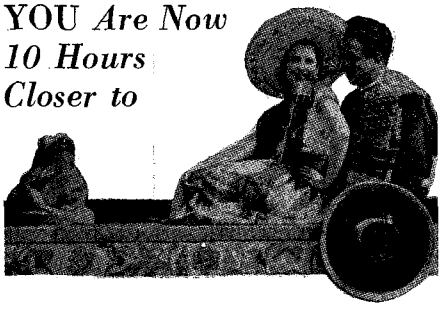

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TOASTS

ARTHUR H. VANDENBERG, United States Senator from Michigan, is by profession a lawyer and banker. Finishing his first complete term of office in the Senate this year, he compiled an enviable record as the most articulate and vigorous member of the Republican opposition to the New Deal majority in that chamber.

JAMES OLIVER BROWN resigned his naval commission two weeks after his graduation from Annapolis, in 1933. He subsequently attended Harvard Law School and received his degree last June. At present he is a law clerk with a New York City firm and plans to take bar examinations next year.

IRVING FISHER has been professor of political economy at Yale University since 1898. During that time his reputation has become international, and he has served in advisory capacities on scores of commissions, both governmental and private. He is also the author of a long list of books dealing with financial matters.

EDWARD A. FILENE, of the well-known family of Boston merchants, is perhaps the outstanding example in America today of an unusually successful businessman who has espoused the liberal political philosophies current today. He has been a warm advocate of the New Deal and, earlier, interested himself in various endeavors to find a way of stabilizing our economic machine.

EVELYN HAVENS was born in a small city in the Northeast but spent most of her life in the Middle West. Following the experiences recounted in her article, she gave up her newspaper work there, and is at present employed in editorial work in New York City.

ROBERT FRANCIS lives in Amherst, Massachusetts and divides his time between writing poetry and teaching the violin. His first volume of poems, *Stand with Me Here*, will be published this month by Macmillan.

MARY M. COLUM is at present living in Norwalk, Connecticut. She will appear monthly in THE FORUM this winter, provided, she complains, that too many people don't come to see her.

VYVYAN ADAMS is a young member of the British House of Commons. He belongs to the Conservative Party, at present in control of the government.

JOHN WILLIAMS ANDREWS served in the air corps during the War and subsequently spent some years as a foreign newspaper correspondent in China. At present he has removed himself to an isolated section of Vermont to write.

MONTGOMERY HARE is a graduate of Yale University and works for a small newspaper in a Long Island, New York, village. "Formula for War" is his first story to be published.

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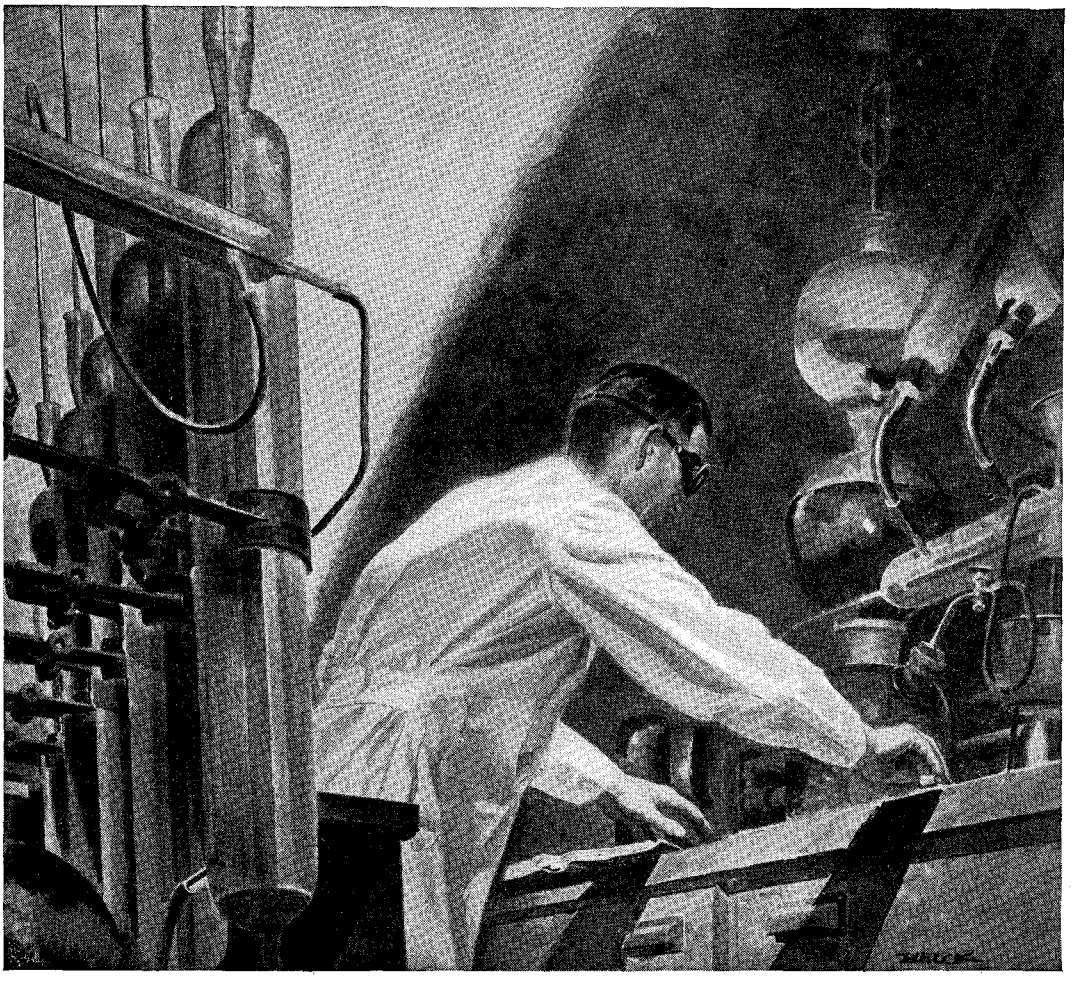

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. . . when and *if* the next war comes. Will it? That's largely up to you — you and all the other decent people of the world. You'll have to fight hard to preserve peace. You'll have to keep your wits about you in order to resist extremely clever appeals to your emotions, and extremely ingenious propaganda. You'll have to throw the weight of aroused public opinion against the handful who want war. So far, in the world's history, this handful has had things entirely its own way. And in the future? ? ?

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